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LEVIA PONDERA  
AN ESSAY BOOK

JOHN AYSCOUGH

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# **LEVIA-PONDERA**







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JOHN AYSCOUGH  
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PROTONOTARY APOSTOLIC)

# LEVIA-PONDERA

AN ESSAY BOOK

BY

JOHN AYSCOUGH.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1913

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TO HIS EMINENCE  
THE LORD CARDINAL BOURNE  
ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

*My Lord Cardinal,—*

*It was with great diffidence that I ventured on so bold a measure as seeking your leave to dedicate my book to Your Eminence. That I should wish to have the great honour of seeing your name associated with a work of mine was, perhaps, more natural than modest or pardonable: and no doubt it would have been more discreet to wait till I should have had something less inadequate to offer you. But my impatience was stronger than my discretion; and so I offered what I had, rather than delay in the hope of being able, in some problematic future, to produce a worthier offering.*

*Your Eminence's kindness has chosen rather to reward my goodwill than punish my presumption. And I can only give my sincere gratitude in return. No one could have been more conscious than myself of the justice of the decision, had your Eminence simply told me that in such a volume as this there could be nothing to render it a suitable offering to a Prince of the Church.*

*It is a mere bundle of essays, and would never have been a book at all but for the strong advice of others whose literary opinion would carry with Your Eminence as much weight as it does with me.*

*Why, then, should so great a name as yours have been sought, to set in the Dedication? On the principle, as I hope Your*

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*Eminence may feel, that leads a child to offer, lovingly, very trumpery gifts to a father. The gifts may be absurd enough, but the father's kindness will not scan them with cold criticism. They are all the giver has, and all that he who accepts them will see in them is the affection they express. Their value is not in themselves, but in the understanding and generosity of him who receives.*

*It is more than thirty years that I have known Your Eminence, and, if your high station has removed me from recent intercourse, neither it nor lapse of time has weakened my memory of the affectionate respect of those far-off days. When the August Head of our Church called you to the highest place a Catholic in England can hold, and the Red Seal of the Holy Father's trust and approval was set upon Your Eminence and your work, no one could have felt more proud and glad than I.*

*When, not long ago, Your Eminence spoke to me some words of most generous encouragement, it was with very keen gratitude that I heard them, and learned from them that in your high place you had still leisure to note the goodwill of those who, in a narrower sphere and humbler manner, were trying to serve the cause Your Eminence has most at heart. Perhaps it was then that, being unable to express my sense of your kindness, thus taken unawares, I conceived the desire of doing it in this clumsy fashion.*

*Begging the blessing of Your Eminence,*

*And kissing the Sacred Purple,*

*I am, My Lord Cardinal,*

*Yours most respectfully,*

JOHN AYSCOUGH.

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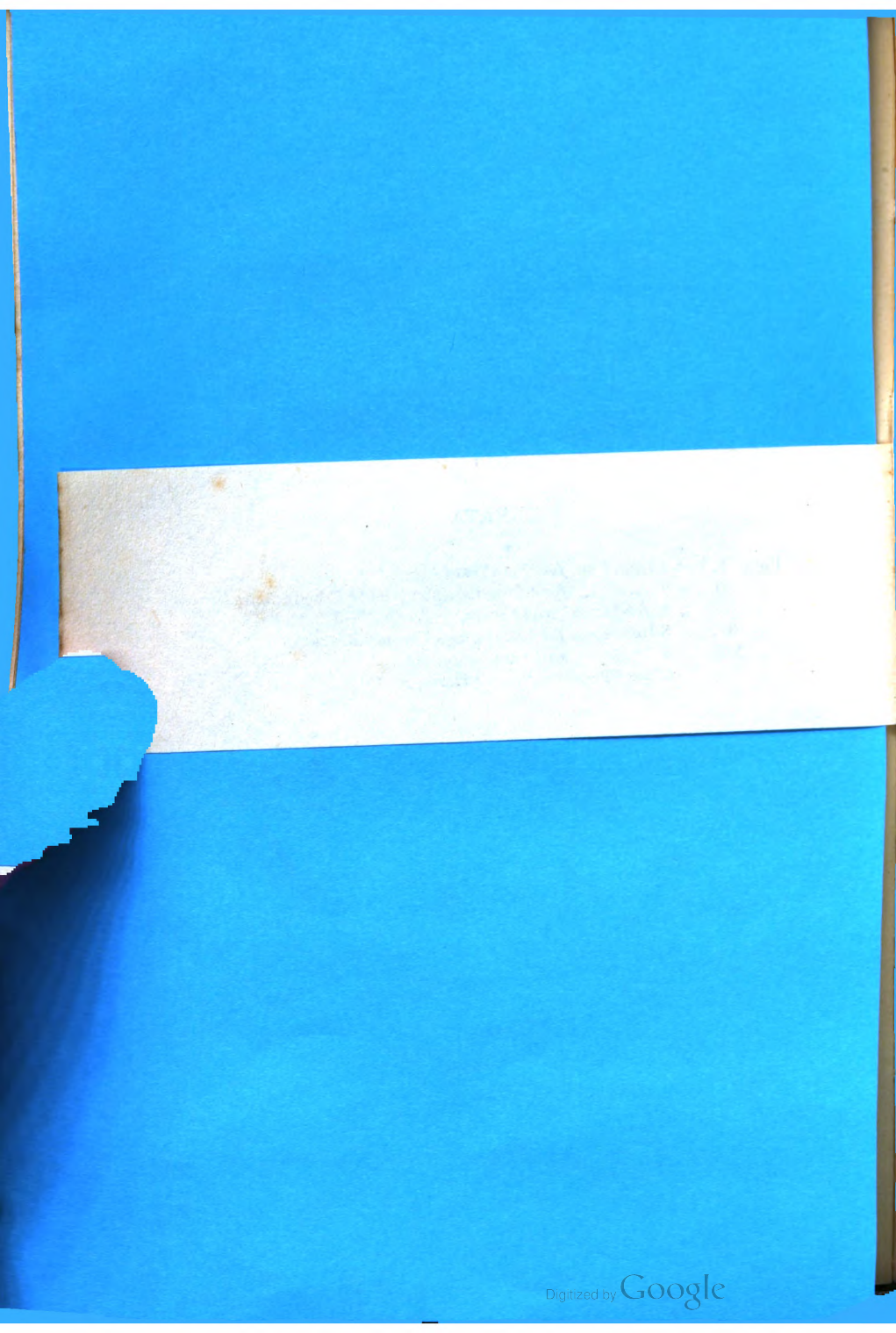
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## ERRATA

- Page 2, line 7 from foot, *for 'was' read 'were.'*  
,, 20, ,, 8 ,, ,, *for 'Edmondsbury' read 'Edmundbury.'*  
,, 30, ,, 5, *for 'soeva' read 'saeva.'*  
,, 137, ,, 8 from foot, *for 'Ecclesiastes' read 'Esaias.'*  
,, 203, ,, 8 ,, *omit 'and so following.'*  
,, 244, ,, 5, *for 'Thomson' read 'Thompson.'*
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# LEVIA-PONDERA

## SIR WALTER

NEARLY thirty years ago I had an opportunity of visiting Abbotsford, and for the next ten years I never had any doubt of my deep regret that I had not clutched greedily at the chance and forced it into a fact, to remember ever after; during the rest of the intervening time I have not been so sure. Of course it matters much less being disappointed in a great man's things than finding the great man himself an anticlimax, as has happened to some literary pilgrims who have found in his shrine the object of their worship, still alive and speechless. Certainly there would have been no disappointment if one had lived long enough ago to find one's self face to face with Sir Walter Scott: none who did were ever disappointed. And it is likely that most of those who go to Abbotsford now so fortify themselves with the determination to be more than satisfied that wild horses (proverbially persuasive) would not draw from them any admission that there has been anything lacking. But so much good resolution is a supererogation when we are pretty sure we shall not need it for practical purposes.

I permit myself to believe that Abbotsford would disappoint me. As a lady devoted to Newman ob-

A



served, after reading Mozley's *Book of Reminiscences of the Oxford Movement*: "I knew it would be disappointing, and it is."

Abbotsford became baronial at a bad moment; at least half a century too soon, or four centuries too late. No self-respecting architect of fifty or sixty years later would have sanctioned the architecture of the armoury, or even that of the study; and pretty as the whole affectation is, it was an affectation all the same.

Of the hundreds of thousands who take the place in, in their round of Scottish sights, only a few, perhaps, really care enough about Scott to mind. I care so much that I would mind.

Some time ago there was a correspondence in the *Saturday Westminster Gazette*, with as many columns in it as there are in the Parthenon, dealing with the question: "Do boys read Walter Scott?" The only thing it established was that if they don't they ought to; which several of us guessed before. If it had proved, as it certainly did not, that the author of the *Waverleys* has passed out of fashion with youthful readers, that would only be showing that schoolboys have not a first-rate taste in fiction. To Sir Walter's position in literature, it could make no difference whatever. Boys are often very clever, sometimes nearly as clever as they imagine themselves, but they are not to be our judges as to the best sort of fiction, for their own judgment is not final. Nor was Sir Walter Scott's works intended for them. So kindly a man would rejoice that any book of his should give pleasure to any one, however youthful, but he certainly did not imagine he was producing a series of boys' books.

Among the letters above alluded to, there were

several which picked out *The Talisman* and *Ivanhoe* as being indeed excellent, very much to the exclusion of the author's other works. Such a judgment would suffice to show the value of the criticism. No true lover of Scott likes to remember that he ever wrote them; and no true lover of Scott ever reads them after the first time. Of course they contain fine passages, or Scott could *not* have written them; nevertheless, they are showy, wordy, tedious, stagey.

The true Scott-reader goes on reading him continually; nobody who loves reading could read *The Talisman* or *Ivanhoe* often. He would say *Ivanhoe* is tolerable, *The Talisman* intolerable. *Kenilworth* is ever so much better than *Ivanhoe*, but ever so much worse than *Woodstock*, and nearly as bad as *Anne of Geierstein*. *Woodstock*, *The Fortunes of Nigel*, and *Peveril of the Peak* are much on a level, and that a very high one. *The Abbot* and *The Monastery* stand lower, but do not stand low compared with any novels other than Scott's.

And then we come to the long list of those glorious books of which the true lover of Scott thinks when he thinks of Scott. Let us group them at first, higgledy-piggledy, then sort them: *Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, *Redgauntlet*, *The Antiquary*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *The Pirate*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, *A Legend of Montrose*, *Old Mortality*, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, *The Black Dwarf*, *The Fair Maid of Perth*.

The more truly you love Scott the more certain will you be that these are his real books, and that for a very simple reason. In these he treats of what he knew, as no one else before or since has known—Scotland; and those which treat of times nearest to his own are by far the best. For that latter reason, having

put it in, let us now leave out, *The Fair Maid of Perth*. Scott was in love with mediævalism, and especially with its trappings; but with the exception of its trappings it may be questioned whether he knew as much of it as he thought. Feudalism dominated his retrospect of the Middle Ages, and of feudalism he knew the terms, and perhaps the costumes. But side by side with feudalism in the Middle Ages, and much above it, stood the Catholic Church, and of the Catholic Church Scott, with all his genius and his knowledge, was extremely, almost entirely, ignorant. For his interest in the Church was never more than antiquarian.

However clever a writer may be, if he can regard Mediæval Christianity only from outside, and only from a Georgian standpoint, he is bound to blunder. The outside view of the Catholic Church Scott had, and he had a keen eye for the picturesque, so he could describe vividly; but even in description he came appalling "croppers"—as we shall instance presently. Blunders apart, those descriptions were not always fine; melodramatic, stagey, verbose when intended to be grandiose, they lacked the one thing description imperatively demands, truth and reality.

The real influence of the Church in the Middle Ages was never revealed to this man of genius, for revelation is accorded not to talent but to sincerity; and in this matter Scott was not sincere but opportunistic. He did not grasp the heart of the Middle Age; for its heart was its faith; he had merely read of its behaviour, which was sometimes queer and sometimes scandalous, as was the behaviour of the admired Primitive Age, as has been that of the age enlightened by all the pure beams of Scott's beloved Reformation. Of its slang

he reproduced or excogitated fearsome quantities, which make his paladins in *The Talisman* talk as no man ever could talk and be permitted to live; of its costumes he had whole wardrobes at disposal, what it ate with, and what weapons it slew its adversaries or brethren in arms withal, he knew as well or better than his purpose required; but how it thought he had not the least idea.

Thus *The Fair Maid of Perth* lives inasmuch as it is Scott's: and is woodenish in so far as it is particularly mediæval.

Incomparably better than any other mediæval romance of his is *Quentin Durward*; and half its charm is due to the Scots element in it: the other half to the excellence of the tale, the rapidity and freshness of the action.

But now let us joyfully turn from his half-successes, which would have been splendid successes for any one else, to the realm where he reigns alone. He is known as the author of *Waverley*, and had he written nothing else he would have deserved all his fame, and perhaps have kept it, though it is not certain that all deserved fame becomes immortality. Nevertheless, *Waverley* is not by any means equal to the others in its group, as we have taken leave to arrange our group. It was altogether novel when it appeared: its theme was romantic and yet real, its inhabitants were alive and interesting; but it has nothing approaching the interest and vitality of *Rob Roy*, which in turn has to yield even to *The Pirate*. There are characters in *Rob Roy* better, perhaps, than any in *The Pirate*; there are less convincing characters in *The Pirate*, it may be, than some of those in *Rob Roy*, but as a tale *The Pirate* is more of a book. One great personage in it, Norna of

the Fitful Head, I confess strikes me as a preliminary study for Meg Merrilees in *Guy Mannering*, and nothing like so fine; only Scott could have prevented her from being a bore, and it took him all his time. She was too Mumbo-jumbo, and her lunacy was really not called for. If she was determined to go mad she should have done something horrible on purpose; her father's death was so entirely accidental that so clever a woman must have been aware of it. Mordaunt's father was sharp enough to know that he *was* a bore, out and out, and that was why he shut himself up in Sumburgh Castle. But the Yellowleys are delightful, especially the lady, and the Pirate himself was interesting in spite of his goodness. Scott does not insist on his teaching Sunday-School in the final chapters as Ballantyne did with a far naughtier pirate in the days of our own youth, when nobody asked us in the newspapers whether we could read Scott or no.

*Redgauntlet* is so excellent that we wonder it is not commonly mentioned as one of Scott's best books; but perhaps that is because it begins in a series of letters. Scott, however, repents quite early and the story tells itself presently in plain narrative.

In this most interesting story Scott's hankering after the Royal Stuarts betrays itself again, a hankering, we permit ourselves to fancy, more sincere, as it was certainly more natural, than his rather fulsome laudations of their Hanoverian heir. Perhaps he would have urged that the Stuarts appealed to him merely as romantic properties, on account of their picturesqueness; and Charles Edward was undoubtedly more picturesque than the Prince Regent or his dismally perverse father. But I suspect there was an attraction for Scott in the Royal Stuarts deeper-lying than the

mere obvious fact of their romantic value, though to no one was such a romantic value more appealing than to him; they represented not only the exiled dynasty of England, but theirs was the ancient, royal house of Scotland, and that mattered much more to the great Scots romanticist. Scotland was mainly the theatre of their final tragedy, and if the throne of Scotland alone could have contented them for a while, it might well have happened that the thrones of England and Ireland would have been added in due time. The hurried advance to Derby was, perhaps, only less ill-advised than the hasty retreat thence. The position of the Regent, Charles Edward, in Scotland was strong enough to have become far stronger; if the Prince of Wales had, after publishing his father's manifesto, sat firm in Edinburgh, and awaited its results, thousands of those who were hesitating would have made up their minds to give in their adhesion to the cause which they knew was that of loyalty and patriotism; and time would have been given to the loyalists of Wales, England, and Ireland to gather their wits together, and to organise their aid with some mutual understanding and confidence.

It is no matter of conjecture, but historical fact, that large and important forces were at work for the Stuart cause, and were actually ready when their readiness was too late; that they were late was not entirely their fault, there had been too much hurry, not only in the disastrous resolution to retreat from England, but also in the precipitate though chivalrous resolve to push into it.

Scott, as I imagine, thought of Charles Edward as of one who might very easily have been his king *de facto*, who barely missed it, and missed it so gloriously that

he could not help dwelling on it; whether he cared that Charles was undoubtedly king *de jure* I cannot tell. But it seems to me plain that Scott was at all events Scot enough to prefer the idea of a Scots monarch in Scotland to that of a Hanoverian sovereign in London.

In the group we have ventured to make of his greatest novels there is an inner group of the very greatest: *The Antiquary*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, and *The Bride of Lammermoor*. In these four all his best qualities are at their best: no real Scott-reader is ever tired of reading them, and every reading makes them more dear and more admired. They are the four walls of Scott's monument in the hearts of his lovers all the world over. Familiarity does not lessen their charm, or weaken their hold, but strengthens it. For my own part I could read through to the last page of any one of them and turn back to the first and read on again with undiminished delight. I do not think the fascination of any of them depends much on the hero. Lovel is not the attraction in *The Antiquary*, nor the Master of Ravenswood in *The Bride of Lammermoor*; in *The Heart of Midlothian* there is no hero at all, and in *Guy Mannering* the office is put into commission. In *The Heart of Midlothian* is the finest of all Scott's heroines; but in the other three the heroines could be left out and the books lose nothing. Lucy, in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, is as anæmic as Amelia in *Vanity Fair*, and neither so interesting nor so pathetic. One may want to box Amelia's ears, but she *had* ears, if she hadn't eyes; Lucy had nothing but good looks miraculously existing in space, without any particular human identity to support them.

Miss Wardour in *The Antiquary* is better, because she does exist, though her existence does not matter much to anybody but Mr. Lovel; she was quite a proper young woman for him to marry, but he might have married her in the *Morning Post* just as well as in *The Antiquary*. Julia Mannering is far better; she can be pert, and her father required more pertness than he often got from her; she can be lively, and her good looks are not a mere assertion of the author's; the reader can picture her, and the picture is natural, pleasant, and animated. But the interest of *Guy Mannering* does not depend on her lover, and she and her young man, who is a nice young man and very pretty-behaved, might have arranged their affairs elsewhere and the book have been as fascinating without them.

Jeanie Deans has a different position altogether; she and Diana are Scott's best heroines, and *The Heart of Midlothian* could not get on without her; the real story in the book is the story of her journey to London. There are characters in *The Heart of Midlothian* as impossible to do without as any in the other books of this group, but the book does not depend on them as the others do really depend on their "minor characters." Nor is the interest we feel in Jeanie Deans the interest we may have in her own rather mature love story, but rather in spite of it. Mr. Butler was, no doubt, an excellent minister; as a lover he is not engrossing. It would, no doubt, be esteemed a heresy to say that these four best books of Scott's would have got on very well if there had been no loves of heroes and heroines at all. It is my own opinion, but ordinary readers will probably not share it.

When Bingley, in *Pride and Prejudice*, talked of



giving a ball, his sister perceived that Darcy was reading a book, and did not fancy he cared much for the idea of dancing.

"I should like balls much better," she cried, "if they were carried on in a different manner ; but there is something insufferably tedious in the usual process of such a meeting. It would surely be more rational if conversation instead of dancing made the order of the day."

"Much more rational, my dear Caroline, I dare say," her brother objected, "but it would not be near so much like a ball."

Perhaps the public will maintain that if Sir Walter had left the love affairs of his heroes and heroines out of these four novels, they might have been just as good, but not nearly so much like novels,

There remain after these four greatest books other four, as Scott himself would have said: *A Legend of Montrose*, *Old Mortality*, *The Black Dwarf*, and *The Surgeon's Daughter*, which we also included in our own group of favourites. They are much shorter than any of the novels we have mentioned above, and for that reason, chiefly, they are not commonly classed among the author's "important" works. Their brevity is all I can urge against them. They are otherwise quite worthy of ranking with more admired books of Scott's. Personally I would say that they are equal in bulk of interest to the interesting part of some of their more favoured brethren ; for not all of *Rob Roy* is particularly interesting, nor all of *Redgauntlet*, and even *The Heart of Midlothian* need not be begun at the first chapter nor continued to the last. No true Scott-reader can dispense with them ; and *The Black Dwarf* has a sombre power that is sometimes missed in other places where Scott showed more apparent intention to achieve it.

As we mentioned Diana Vernon parenthetically above, as being in our opinion one of his two finest heroines, let us say one word more about *Rob Roy*; the family at Osbaldistone Hall was, we take leave to feel assured, far nicer than Scott chooses to allow—that was just his “whiggery.” As for Helen MacGregor, whose pedigree is not given, we are confident that the blood of Norna of the Fitful Head ran in her veins; in their Ossianic moments the family resemblance is ponderously close.

We also mentioned above that Scott, whose interest in the Catholic Church being merely that of an antiquary, lacking sympathy and sincerity, left him without the true key to the spirit of the Middle Ages, fell occasionally into queer blunders even when attempting nothing more than description. An instance of this occurs in one of the four books which we believe all fervent admirers of his admire most.

In the second volume of *The Antiquary* there is a flagrantly picturesque account of the midnight obsequies of the Catholic Countess of Glenallan. The priest, dressed in “cope and stole, held open the service-book”—(the breviary as we are informed on the next page)—“another churchman in his vestments bore a holy-water sprinkler—and two boys in white surplices held censers with incense,” and the dirge goes on “until a loud *Alleluia*, pealing through the deserted arches of St. Ruth, closed the singular ceremony.” Singular, indeed. Sir Walter Scott was undoubtedly the only human being who ever heard an *Alleluia*, however loud, in the funeral offices of the Catholic Church.

## A SCAMP'S PROBATION

It is odd to note how lightly the English critic has, for the most part, leaned upon the faults of Henry VIII, and how heavily he has dealt with the memory of Charles II. One, indeed, had the great merit of being a Tudor, and the other was so ill-advised as to be a Stuart. Tudor despotism has never deeply scandalised even the devout Constitutionalist, because it was successful: Stuart unconstitutionality shocks everyone, because it failed ignominiously. When monarchs go about disregarding popular liberties, they are unpardonable should they fail.

To compare one historical character with another is always a seductive employment, though it does not always lead to much. A comparison between Henry VIII and Charles II does not obviously suggest itself, yet in one particular it is justified by a queer resemblance in their circumstances; and the divergence of the event allows pretext for a little praise of a man who has never been overpraised.

The idea of comparing Henry and Charles could not be suggested by their portraits. Henry in his youth was attractive, fair, and blonde. Even in his youth Charles was ugly, black, and lean. Henry became heavy and fat, his body ponderous and ungainly, much too big for his legs: his face, no longer comely, grew coarse and bloated, and he was florid and ruddy. His later portraits suggest neither distinc-

tion nor high breeding. Charles had a singularly graceful figure, light and active; his face, in spite of its harsh lines, was interesting and clever; and no one could have looked more well-bred. For all his plainness he had, as people used to say, "so much countenance." Nor was there in their circumstances more than one important parallel; of that we shall speak presently. Both, indeed, succeeded to a crown to which for a time neither seemed destined, but the cause was not the same. Henry was born a younger son, and only became heir-apparent after Prince Arthur's death, when he was himself eleven years old: at nineteen the peaceful death of his father made him king. Charles was also a second son, but his older brother had not survived his birth, and he was heir-apparent from his own. At nineteen the execution of his father made him king *de jure*, but he was an exile, and for eleven years England was no longer a kingdom: his chance of reigning appeared, during a long time, more than problematical.

Henry was born in the old religion, his parents both belonged to it, and he was bred in it. Charles was born of a Protestant father, baptized in the English Church, and brought up in it. Charles I was High Church, and had apparently, for some time, dreams of an Anglican reunion with Rome, but he had no idea of becoming a Catholic himself, and he was determined none of his sons should follow their mother's religion.

Henry had a weakness for theology, and wrote the famous treatise, against Luther, on the Seven Sacraments, which gained him, from Leo X, in 1521, the title of Defender of the Faith; in later life his fondness for monks was like Tom Tulliver's for birds—he liked throwing stones at them. Charles II was not ecclesi-

astically-minded, and wrote no tracts : but he hated seeing helpless priests and friars falsely accused and persecuted, and, at considerable risk to his own popularity, tried to stop it.

Henry and Charles were both vicious, both sensualists : but Henry, we hear, was virtuous in youth, and Charles was not ; his first illegitimate son was born to him when he was not more than sixteen. Henry certainly had at first been destined to the priesthood, and his early teaching was in good and wise hands. Charles had a silly wiseacre for his first governor, and for his second a notorious scamp, without faith or morals ; at twelve he was in command of a troop of horse, and at fifteen he was a general, living the reckless life of a cavalier soldier.

Henry had a taste for matrimony and indulged it six times ; Charles only married once, and his wife had the good fortune to survive him. Both were bad and faithless husbands, but Charles was neither brutal nor cruel ; if he tired of his wife he stuck to her, and neither brought her to the scaffold nor divorced her.

No attempt will be made here to defend Charles's morality : no human being who reverences purity, or even decency, can defend it, Not a word can be said in defence of it ; it was, plainly, too bad to bear speaking of. It cannot even be urged in mitigation that he was no worse than his contemporaries ; for, if his court was flagrantly and shamelessly bad, it was chiefly because of his own flagrant and shameless example. But if it is impossible to extenuate Charles II's vices, there is no necessity for insisting upon them, because they never have been extenuated, and they always have been insisted upon. Henry's vices did not make him unpopular with his contemporaries, nor have they

much injured him with posterity. Nor did those of Charles ever make him unpopular while he lived, for he was, in fact, extremely popular; but they have ruined him in history. Henry broke with the old Church and died under her ban; Charles laid his dying head upon her breast, and with his dying lips sought to obtain, from her promises of mercy, all the consolation and hope his misspent life so sorely needed. In the verdict of England it could not be counted to him for righteousness. Henry had been the enemy of France, and it was so counted to him; Charles had been her friend, and worse: for he was her tool and her pensioner.

So much must be laid to the charge of Charles, and so little of it can be explained away, or softened, that it is an office of justice, as well as of charity, to point out one important matter in which he compares most favourably with his more-admired predecessor. Of his wit and his good-nature we do not intend to speak: that he was witty all bore witness, but his wit was foul. He was extremely good-natured, but he was more indolent: and his indolence usually got the upper hand when they came in conflict. He was much more grateful to those who had served him than kings are wont to be, and he was most grateful to those who had befriended him in adversity, as was natural in so clever and so shrewd a man: for services rendered to a sovereign in prosperity are more apt to eye rewards than to deserve them.

It seems certain that this scapegrace prince was a good fellow: which of course does not imply that he was good. He had also much more claim to the title of gentleman than George IV: how Charles would have treated a wife like Caroline of Brunswick we can

only surmise, but we can surmise without uncertainty that he would not have treated her as she was treated by Mrs. Fitzherbert's husband. Charles II's portrait is that of an ugly man, but it is unmistakably that of a gentleman; and the face, harsh and forbidding as it is usually called, is intensely interesting: none the less so from its invariable melancholy. The portrait of the First Gentleman in Europe can interest no one except a student of poses and deportment: its serious simper is more repulsive than any scowl, and it suggests a wax dummy rather than a man—if wax dummies could tell lies and betray other dummies silly enough to trust in them. It is not, however, with George IV and his treatment of his queen that we wish to compare Charles II in his behaviour towards Catherine of Braganza, but with Henry VIII and his behaviour as a husband.

Catherine of Aragon had been Henry's wife for many years; and her conduct as a wife and queen had been faultless. She had borne him several children, of whom one survived, and that one outlived her father: there was no question of the succession involved, as there was in the case of Charles II and his childless wife. For there was no reluctance to accept Princess Mary Tudor as her father's heir, and, until he suggested it, no one imagined there could be the least flaw in her claim. Her religion was the same as his own, and was that of the realm. Whereas the next in succession to Charles, were he to leave no lawful issue, was a brother unpopular with those who would become his subjects, a convert to Catholicity at a time when England had long renounced the ancient faith, and widely suspected of an obstinate determination to bring it back. But Catherine of Aragon was six years older than Henry; she had no beauty, and the king

was tired of her. Of the delicacy of conscience pretended by him as an excuse for seeking divorce, we need say no more than that it did not prevent him from taking as his mistress the woman he wanted before he married her, whom he married before Cranmer pronounced the divorce, and whom he ruthlessly beheaded three years later—whom, within three months of his marriage with her, he had warned “to shut her eyes to his unfaithfulness, as her betters had done, for he could abase yet more than he had raised her.” The day after her execution he married Jane Seymour; and less than three months after *her* death he married Anne of Cleves, whom he divorced in half a year—in July 1540. His fifth wife he beheaded eighteen months after his marriage with her, and his sixth had the good luck to survive him.

Charles II in one way treated his wife as badly as any man could treat the woman he had married: that is in the matter of unfaithfulness. But he did not behave to her with brutal cruelty, nor did he divorce her: and to this last course he was urged repeatedly and strongly. An important clause in the marriage contract remained unfulfilled, for the immense dowry agreed upon was never paid. But poor Catherine's great failure was in bringing no heir to the crown. Her religion made her many enemies in England, and Charles would have found nothing easier than to rid himself of her if he would but have consented. Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon was a most unpopular measure with his subjects, by whom his religious scruples were not appreciated; by whom, too, the queen was liked and respected. A divorce between Charles and Catherine of Braganza would have been popularly approved, and it was persistently urged upon him.

B



Charles was certainly not a good man: had he been as bad as Henry he would have yielded. He liked his wife, but he had never loved her; she was not beautiful, and she was not always complaisant: she could make scenes, and she could give trouble. She had cause, if ever woman had, for jealousy and indignation, and she showed both very early in her reign. Charles was angry, but he had heart enough and conscience enough not to respect her the less. It was her desperate yielding that half lost her that respect. Then there came one disappointment after another in the matter of an heir. Repeatedly the queen said there was to be one, and as often it came to nothing. Meanwhile those most opposed to the Catholic Duke of York became more and more resolved that he should never reign, and more and more open in their suggestions that the king should get rid of his wife, and marry another. There were all sorts of pretexts to advance besides the real one that the poor queen was childless—some urged that even the necessary dispensation from the Pope had never been obtained, or had been granted only after the marriage had taken place; that Catherine had not responded in the marriage service; that the king had plighted his troth but she had not. And it was remembered that Charles before the marriage, while Catherine was still in Portugal, had stipulated that if the articles of the marriage treaty were not all performed the marriage should be null and void—and they had not all been fulfilled. It is not our point, however, to try and see what sort of a case against the royal marriage those might have made out who were eager to dissolve it: the point is merely to remind ourselves that they were eager, and that they could and would have succeeded

but for one obstacle. The queen was quite powerless to help herself, as powerless as Catherine of Aragon had been: at one time she was within measurable distance of losing not only her crown but her life; and between her and death there stood again but one obstacle. In both cases the obstacle was the same: the honest resolve of her faithless scamp of a husband to save her from either divorce or death.

Even in the Tudor age Henry was not the more admired by his subjects for the bloody justice he caused to fall on Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard. Had Charles merely stood aside and left Catherine of Braganza to the fate prepared for her by those who invented and engineered the Popish Plot, there can be no doubt he would have been himself more popular and more secure. His manly determination that no harm should come to the wife he had neglected and dishonoured by his infidelities by no means made him more popular at the time. His stiffness in the matter only made those who had gone crazy about the plot hint that the king himself was shielding those who were plotting. Catherine stood in grave peril. Titus Oates swore that her own physician, Sir George Wakeman, had been offered £10,000 to poison the king's medicine, and that the queen was in the scheme. Later he swore that he had heard her say she would help Sir George to poison Charles. On November 28, 1678, Oates and Bedloe brought these charges against the queen before the Parliament. "I, Titus Oates," that miscreant cried aloud at the Bar of the Commons, "accuse Catherine, Queen of England, of high treason." We may wonder what Henry VIII would have done had such charges been brought against a wife who had borne him no child; had he

been without an heir; had the next in succession been obnoxious to the country, and the wife in question been as helpless and friendless as was Catherine of Braganza, and one who had vehemently resented her husband's infidelities and made scenes. What Charles did was to send at once for the queen from Somerset House, whither she had withdrawn from court in 1674, when the Duchess of Portsmouth was in the zenith of her popularity. He brought Catherine back to Whitehall, and fixed her in her apartments next his own. He took pains to prove his entire trust in her, and respect for her, by the most careful marks of honour and attention. "If the king had given way in the least Queen Catherine would have been very ill-used," says Roger North, "for the plotters had reckoned on his weakness with regard to women, and flattered him with the hopes of having an heir to his dominions." "I believe," said Charles, "they think I have a mind for a new wife, but I will not suffer an innocent woman to be wronged."

Oates was put in prison and kept under guard, till the king was himself charged with muzzling a witness, and obliged to let the miscreant out again. Charles himself examined him and proved him to be a liar, and a clumsy one, on more than one occasion. Meanwhile Titus Oates' accomplice, Bedloe, stuck to it that Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey had been murdered by the queen's servants in the queen's house; at first saying that he was smothered with pillows, then that he had been strangled with a linen cravat. It does not matter to us here that this informer was a felon lately come out of Newgate, and that £500 reward, offered for the discovery of the murderer or murderers, naturally appealed to him. It did not matter to the hatches

of the plot: on his evidence three of Catherine's servants were executed, one of them a Protestant. What concerns us is that if Charles had been a villain as well as a scamp, he might have been rid of his wife without himself lifting a finger. It was not only Oates who offered him the chance. A Mrs. Elliott was sent to the king on October 23, 1678, and informed him that the queen was concerned in the plot against his own life. He heard her with displeasure and impatience. When the woman had the insolence to add that she thought he would have been glad to part with her majesty on any terms, Charles turned fiercely on her, and had her removed from his presence, saying angrily, "I will never suffer an innocent lady to be oppressed." Everybody wanted him to believe in the plot, and he would not oblige them, though he was quite able to see how greatly it would have been counted to him for righteousness. It was he who proved the absurdity and falsehood of Oates' evidence against Catherine. Indolent, easy-going, and scape-grace as he was, he behaved throughout like a loyal, conscientious gentleman. When it seemed, for the moment, that even the sovereign's championship of the queen's innocence of any plot against the sovereign's own life might be unavailing, he took secret precautions for her removal from England, if such a measure should prove necessary to her safety. But Charles was not only steadfastly resolved against such a crime as that of ridding himself of his wife by allowing her enemies to take her life: he was equally steadfast in refusing to avail himself of the milder remedy of divorce.

Long before the Popish Plot suggestions had been made to the king in reference to getting rid of the

queen; Buckingham urged it upon Charles, one of his schemes being that Catherine should be kidnapped and spirited away to the American plantations, where she would be well treated but no more heard of. Her husband could thus obtain a divorce on the plea of his wife's desertion of him. Bishop Burnet, who was the profligate Buckingham's dependant, is authority for this delightful story. Charles rejected the proposal with horror. But Burnet himself was willing to play *Cranmer* to Charles II's *Henry VIII*. The future Bishop of Salisbury concocted a brace of tracts on polygamy and divorce, and tied them together under the name of *A Solution of Two Cases of Conscience*. His own conscience as a minister of the gospel he seems to have held in complete solution. The annulling of marriage on account of the wife's childlessness may, he teaches us, "be easily justified both before God and man." His talents, had he been at leisure to write thus a hundred and forty years later, might have recommended him to the favourable notice of Napoleon I. As for polygamy, he was even more ingenious and even less correct. Before the Fall, he allowed, one woman was meant for one man; a handsome admission when one remembers that for the one man in existence, there was only one woman available at the period in question. Things had, however, changed since. Disease and other disabilities had supervened. Monogamy might be the more perfect, but polygamy was noway sinful. Even in the new law there was no "simple and express discharge of polygamy": and he himself saw "nothing so strong against polygamy as to balance the great and visible hazards that hang over so many thousands if it be not allowed." This successor of the Apostles was certainly one born out of

due time—too late for his talents to be available against Catherine of Aragon, too early for them to be used against Josephine. Those talents did not, however, recommend him to Charles II. Instead of making Burnet a bishop he, later on, turned him out of the Chapel Royal. It was to William III this would-be Cranmer owed his mitre.

But there were always plots against Catherine's position as queen, though the arch-plotter might change. In 1671 the Duke of York had made open avowal of his conversion to the Catholic Church: the Parliament answered, early in 1673, by passing the Test Act, which required all naval and military officers to receive the sacrament in the Church of England, and to sign the declaration against Transubstantiation: this obliged the king's brother to resign the office of Lord High Admiral, which he had filled with ability and distinction. His second marriage with a Catholic princess, Maria d'Este, daughter of the Duke of Modena, suggested to the Parliament two measures, in both of which it failed: one was an Exclusion Bill, by which the Duke of York should be declared incapable, on account of his religion, of succeeding to the crown; the other was a renewal of the project of the king's divorce. In the Commons one Vaughan was to move that without a Protestant queen there could be no security for the Protestant religion. Charles, always needy, was to be bribed by the offer of £500,000 if he would provide himself with a Protestant consort. He only heard of it when the day for the bringing forward of this motion was fixed. Here was a fine chance for him. Money he always was in want of: the divorce could have gone merrily on, and it would have been by none of his contriving. He at once declared that if his

conscience would let him divorce his wife it would let him murder her.

This beautiful scheme had been hatched by Shaftesbury: its failure did not discourage him. His irritably mischievous brain presently devised another. Of all Charles' sons the Duke of Monmouth was the most popular, and he was regarded as a Protestant champion. Monmouth himself seems to have been cajoled and managed by the evil Achitophel. To Charles himself the matter was opened. The king was reminded that Monmouth was his eldest son, which he knew, if Shaftesbury did not, was untrue, his eldest son being another James, James de la Cloche du Bourg de Jarsey. *That* James was a Catholic and useless for Shaftesbury's purpose. The king was flattered by being told of Monmouth's popularity and cleverness: he had much affection for his children, though they had no business to exist. If Charles would agree to give his bastard to England as heir to her throne, it could be managed quite simply: he would merely have to declare that he had been married to Lucy Walter, and Shaftesbury would himself provide witnesses to swear to it. Charles undoubtedly believed himself to be Monmouth's father: Shaftesbury must have known that it was at least as likely that the Protestant duke had no royal blood at all, but was probably the son of Colonel Robert Sidney. When the king heard this disgusting and infamous proposal, he was amazed at its iniquitous effrontery. "I would liefer," he said, "see James [Monmouth] hung up at Tyburn than entertain such a thought."

Having failed in two attempts to oust Catherine from the throne, Shaftesbury's efforts were bent in a more sombre direction, and the Popish Plot followed. From this also she was, as we have seen, saved by her hus-

band. When the Plot had done its bloody work, and the queen was seen to be strong in the king's loyal protection, Monmouth again became the pawn to be played. In 1679 he was encouraged by the Protestant party to figure as Prince of Wales; he had the three feathers painted on his coach; his health was publicly drunk with royal honours by the title of Prince of Wales, and he paraded himself before the Protestant mob as their hope and leader, all uncovering to him as to a prince of the blood.

Charles, however, was determined in no way to connive at so monstrous an injury to the rights of his wife and of his brother: and on March 31, 1679, he published a proclamation from Whitehall as follows: "To avoid any dispute which may happen in time to come concerning the succession to the Crown, the King declares in the presence of Almighty God that he never gave or made any contract of marriage, nor was married to any woman whatever but to his present wife, Queen Catherine, now living." Charles had by no means forgotten Shaftesbury's insolent proposal of the year before, and, in the High Court of Chancery, he proceeded to record that "On the word of a King and the faith of a Christian he was never married to Mrs. Barlow, *alias* Walter, the Duke of Monmouth's mother, or to any woman whatsoever, besides the now Queen."

Another attempt to destroy Catherine's position as lawful queen had failed: and again the failure was due to the firmness and conscience of the king. But the efforts against her swayed up and down like a seesaw, from schemes against the legality of her marriage to plots against her life.

On July 9, 1679, a month after Charles had registered



his protest in Chancery as to his never having married Monmouth's mother, or anyone but the queen, his brother wrote to the Prince of Orange that some new plot against Catherine would be sure to be laid. And not many days later a servant of Monmouth's came to Shaftesbury and his committee and declared that in the previous September, when he was at Windsor, he had heard Hankinson, of the queen's chapel, bid her confessor have care of the four Irishmen he had brought along with him "to do the business for them." The Privy Council moved that the queen should stand her trial, but Charles indignantly refused to allow "so injurious aspersion on so virtuous a princess." This was in the summer of 1679. In November the Exclusion Bill was thrown out, and Shaftesbury, then in the Lords, moved for a Bill of Divorce, which by separating the king and Queen Catherine, might enable him to marry a Protestant consort, and thus leave the crown to legitimate issue. This he affirmed was the "sole remaining chance of security, liberty, and religion."

Achitophel's love of religion was notorious: it was edifying to see him, who had been so lately willing to see Colonel Sidney's son on the throne of England, thus eager for the descent of the crown to legitimate issue. Here was another chance for Charles to be rid, without any efforts of his own, of a childless wife, who had often quarrelled with him, and whom he did not love, though he liked and respected. But, if he did not love her, he had a manly pity for her defencelessness, and pity is akin to love in hearts that are not base. Shaftesbury's motion was warmly seconded by the Earls of Salisbury and of Essex, and by Lord Howard of Ettrick; had the king allowed himself to be supposed favourable or neutral, Catherine's fate, as queen, would

have been sealed. But Charles was by no means neutral. He took the pains of seeing each peer severally, showed his anger and disgust plainly, and begged each lord to vote against the wicked measure. There was no mistaking his earnestness and righteous horror. The lords did as he wished, and the shameful bill was discarded.

Once again Charles showed his determination that no injustice should be done to his brother, whatever his interference might cost himself in the way of popularity. On March 26, 1681, the Exclusion Bill was brought up again by the Parliament at Oxford. On the 28th, while the Commons were all agog with eagerness to push it through, the king came down. He had hastily donned his state robes, and had himself carried to where the Parliament was sitting in a chair, with curtains close drawn. Without escort or attendance, he entered the Lords Chamber, and took his seat upon the throne, bidding the Commons be called to the Bar. They came hurriedly, and he briefly told them that proceedings so ill begun could end in no good, and forthwith dissolved the Parliament. As stoutly had Charles stood faithful to the lonely queen throughout her dark hour. Through all the evil days of the Plot he kept her close to him, studiously showing his deep respect and full confidence. Her last accuser, Fitzharris, who, like the others, had trumped up against her charges of conspiring to poison her faithless husband, Charles himself detected, as he had detected the others, in false witness: and he himself was brought, by the king's orders, to trial for high treason. He was found guilty and condemned to death, and Charles flatly refused any pardon for the false accuser of his wife.

What we have said has been said briefly and

hurriedly. What Charles II did, to his great and undying honour, has not been puffed out or magnified; but it amounts at least to this: that a man confessedly a scamp and a scapegrace had a conscience, though it was not overworked; that there were temptations he could resist; that when it came to persecuting an ill-used and helpless woman, he would not hold any hand in the game, whatever he might seem to stand to win by it: but laid aside his habitual indolence to work in her defence. That he would purchase neither popularity nor personal gratification and profit at the cost of baseness, or by consenting to let injustice be done to wife or brother. That, where a much-glorified king failed, he, who has never been glorified at all, did not fail. Not once but on many different occasions, there came to him an easy chance of doing, or allowing to be done, something which would have been convenient to himself—and he would not: it was too bad for him—*potuit transgredi, et non est transgressus: facere mala et non fecit.*

## “THE ENTAIL”: AN APPRECIATION

REALLY great reputations have a vitality which enables them to survive that on which they were originally grounded.

Thus Johnson's was assured by his written works long before Boswell had given the man himself and his talk to all the world; but, though Johnson's reputation has suffered no diminution, the number of those who now read the works themselves is probably not great. Miss Jenkyns preferred them to Dickens, but, then, she would neither read Dickens nor listen when Captain Brown—"poor, dear, deluded man"—would try to read him aloud to her; and of the very many who prefer Dickens to Johnson there are few who ever read even *Rasselas*, and if possible, fewer still who have read *London*, or *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. It makes no difference: Johnson is as famous as when people were praising and quoting both of those majestic works, and his fame is not confined to the immense, and not decreasing, number of those to whom Boswell is ever dear, or to that, perhaps, less numerous body who still read and delight in the doctor's own *Tour to the Hebrides*. Swift, who took care never to go to the Hebrides, and had no Boswell, is still a giant among the giants of literature, and few there be who read him. And yet the vigorous life of his fame is not to be explained by the mere fact that very great writers have taken him for theme. That he failed to

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extort a bishopric from Queen Anne can hardly surprise us; he did not fail in exacting from his contemporaries a fame so overtopping that it is little attenuated now, though more than two centuries and a half have passed since *sceva indignatio* ceased to tear his angry heart.

Johnson, we may believe, was greater than anything he wrote; Swift's writing was as great as himself, and would suffice for his portrait if we had no other. It does him no injustice, and almost anything a biographer might say of him /would seem unjust were not his work there to sanction it.

Fear should cast out perfect love, and it would not appear difficult to have feared Johnson; nevertheless, he was loved, and is loved by many now. Swift one could only fear, and he is fearful still. His hatred of mankind was sincere, and he made no exception in his own favour. The only tribute he asked of men was their admiration and their hate, and it is hard to refuse him either.

Almost all fame carries with it admiration, and almost all admiration includes some touch of affection. Swift's huge, but not inflated, fame has never been warmed by any such touch. It is the phenomenon of an intellect untempered by humanity, the apparition of an armed head, without a heart or even a stomach to make it human. And it is not little'd by neglect, any more than was Swift himself.

What is true of him, and of Johnson, is true of many others, of Bacon for one. His fame is much wider than the circle of his readers, and may be greater than all he wrote. It weathers even the silly storm stirred about his name in a teacup by the lady with the frightful name who extorts from him a blushing

admission of his having “written Shakespeare.” Oddly enough, it has not yet been discovered that Virgil was the real author of the *Divine Comedy*, the manuscript of which Dante basely converted to his own mediæval uses, and made the vehicle of local and personal animosities. “If and when” the twentieth century shall ever have worked out its own plentiful fooleries it may have leisure for the discovery: that *enfant terrible* is at present too deeply engaged upon original matter.

If one may back-skip so far to such trivial purpose, Sappho affords a fine instance of great fame surviving that on which it must have been based: though her undoubted claims on the score of personal impropriety will keep it alive during the present age at least. Meanwhile let it rest on a piece.

Richardson’s reputation stands on too much: the pedestal is by far too big for the statue: and he would, for me, be all the more welcome to it if it stood on a great deal less—I do not say the less the better, but much less would have been much better. If Johnson had not made up his mind that Richardson was moral and Fielding wasn’t, the former novelist might have been less illustrious and posterity been as much entertained. All the same Richardson could undoubtedly have written a good novel or so if he had chosen other themes and kept his characters less under his own thumb. The *Bookseller* and the *Prig in Boots* would have done for titles, and the treatment should have been autobiographical; all the correspondence between his characters should have been committed to the flames, and when his heroines wallowed in reflections his great gifts of decorum should have forbidden him to look on. If there were humbugs in his time Richardson must ere this have had to answer for it.

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Fielding was certainly not a humbug, and he was anything rather than a prig; neither did he think of posing as one in the interests of the public. He did not pose at all, nor did Tom Jones, who might, on occasion, have behaved like somebody else without damage to his character. He was not a modest young man, but he was, at any rate, free from the prurient modesty of Richardson's young women, and he might have been better than he was if Fielding had perceived anything amiss in him. Fielding, I imagine, could have made him much worse and have thought no worse of him. No one doubts that Fielding deserves his fame, but what we may doubt is that the number of his readers bears any proportion to it.

The same may be said of those whose fame is, as it should be, immensely greater. Macaulay, no doubt, could learn *Paradise Lost* by heart while he was shaving, and would read it again after tea in spite of knowing it by heart; but there is too much reason to fear that few now read that august epic of damnation, while all treasure Milton's fame as a national possession, and it is as great as ever, though it is exceptional to see *Paradise Lost* in the hands of them that go down to the earth in tubes or occupy their business in motor-buses. It would probably be as great as ever even if *Comus* and *Lycidas* and the *Ode on the Nativity* had never been written, as they will forever be read with an amaze of admiration and delight.

Dante is much greater than Milton, as much greater as the *Divine Comedy* is greater than *Paradise Lost*, and his fame is greater even in England, yet there are not ten Englishmen who ever read ten cantos of the *Inferno*, even in a translation, for ten thousand who have read *Lycidas* and have read it with a personal

joy not dictated by mere submission to criticism or convention. Dante's fame, and his right to it they do take on trust, with a just, though in them eccentric, admission of the principle of authority.

That is what all we have written comes to—the fame of the great is independent of the knowledge of the little: and greater than the proofs of it that some of the great themselves have given. In some cases the reputation may have been overstrained: in the best it is justified by the men themselves, whose visible, or legible, work was only a part of themselves, and must have been less than they. Of course, all great fame is not that of letters, but the realm of letters is, on the whole, less contentious than those other realms in which the great bear sway. Even such as are great themselves do not always esteem correctly the greatness of others: Macaulay, for instance, never dreamed that Newman was a greater man than himself, not because he placed himself too high, but because he placed Newman almost nowhere: the single fact that the Oratorian was one was enough to throw him, for Macaulay, into a false perspective. Theology was to Macaulay a dead language, and the only one that bored him.

Carlyle over-esteemed Mirabeau, and no doubt Heine under-estimated Wellington, as almost all Wellington's countrymen and contemporaries under-estimated Napoleon. Whether Napoleon himself had a just appreciation of Wellington we can hardly decide, for he did not always pronounce the same judgment, and he said what he chose to say without any special reference to what he thought.

Burke was a greater orator than any speech of his would of itself prove, and his fame outlives his oratory,

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of which little is now read by anyone, and nothing by the vast majority of those who hold him famous.

Some reputations have been posthumous, not as merely surviving the vogue of that which created them, but in a much rarer and more surprising sense—as actually coming to birth after the death of those who, at last, achieved them. One instance is that of Chatterton, a more recent instance that of Emily Brontë. In her lifetime it never seems to have occurred to anyone that she was even equal to her sister, than whom she was immeasurably greater; by many it was urged that Charlotte must have been the real author of *Wuthering Heights*, which she was totally incapable of writing; and that *Jane Eyre* was Charlotte Brontë's greatest work was assumed as being without question by those who imagined she had written *Wuthering Heights* also. The same estimate of the two books held ground for more than a generation after Emily Brontë's death: among many it holds ground still; nevertheless the astounding greatness of her work is now being more and more perceived, and her fame is surely, if slowly, coming to its own.

Johnson thought *Tristram Shandy* odd, and said that on that account it would not live: to an early Victorian public *Wuthering Heights* may have appeared odd and uncouth, too. It considered *Jane Eyre* improper, and of doubtful morality; but it recognised that the work was one of genius—the incomparably higher genius of *Wuthering Heights* escaped it altogether.

*Tristram Shandy* is odd enough, but its oddity is the author's whim, and it has in it qualities that other odd books wholly lack. Peacock was as odd as Sterne, but his oddity is about all he has, at all events it

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smothers all else there might have been. *Crazy Castle* and *Headlong Hall* are as exotic to this world as the *Voyage to Laputa*, and no dazzle of brilliance can save them from being almost tedious and barely readable. If Johnson could have handled them he might have “looked them over,” in a sense not Mr. Tappetit’s, but he would not have *read* them.

*Tristram Shandy*, besides being odd, is unique; *Wuthering Heights* is more than unique: it stands not only alone but aloof, in an isolation that is as tragic as itself, more tragic than its amazing creator. In *Tristram Shandy* there is not a breath of passion, *Wuthering Heights* is all passion, and without one touch of that which our novelists of to-day mean by it. Heathcliff is as free from animalism as Lucifer himself.

There are passages in Balzac’s *Père Goriot* that can remind us of nothing short of *King Lear*: there is not a passage in *Wuthering Heights* that suggests a parallel with anything in any other book ever written. Perhaps that is why it appeared, to those who saw its birth, still-born. It is a mania of criticism to ferret out family likenesses. “This book in its best chapters reminds us of Thackeray in his worst.” “The writer’s wit proves him to have read Dickens when Dickens was straining after it.” “*Kenelm Chillingly* is a sincere flattery of *Richard Feverel*.” “*Robert Elsmere* is the result of a lady’s indigestion of *John Inglesant*” —and so following.

As there was no acknowledged masterpiece with which *Wuthering Heights* could be compared, it did not, for a long time, seem advisable to recognise it as a masterpiece at all.

One posthumous reputation is even yet unborn,

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though still longer overdue than was that of Emily Brontë. John Galt was born at Irvine, in Ayrshire, nearly forty years before the birth of Emily Brontë, and he died nearly ten years before her. His fame, when it arrives, will not rest on his epic poem of *The Battle of Largs*, which no one will ever read again, and which he had the sense to want no one to read. It will rest on three of his prose works, whereof only two are now read at all, and those two but little, and of which that which is neglected altogether is by far the best. Besides these three he wrote, first, his *Letters from the Levant*, which were noted at the time and are worth attention now, and eight pieces of fiction: *Sir Andrew Wylie*, *The Provost*, *The Steamboat*, *Ringan Gilhaize*, *The Spae-wife*, *The Omen*, *Rothelan*, and *The Last of the Lairds*. They are not only readable still, but are very worthy of being read. They are not so good but what they might be improved, and their author himself could have improved them, and made them not merely good but excellent. They have a shrewd wit, and many characters that deserve a fuller and less hurried presentment. When Galt wishes to be weird he may be too Ossianic, but he does not fail; when he is content to be quaint his success, even in these eight tales, is very great.

But no one to whom Galt is unknown should begin with them, lest his real claims should be undervalued. Anyone who has learned the value of his best work will be glad that they exist, and glad to return to them—if he can find them, for copies of Galt's books are not too easily come by.

His three longest books are his three best, which is not always the case with great writers of fiction. George Eliot's shortest was also her most perfect, and

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her longest is among her most imperfect, though it is not her least good. Mrs. Gaskell's shortest work has a perfection that sets it by itself and makes it hard to realise that the rest, with all their high merit, were by the same author.

John Galt's three long books were *The Ayrshire Legatees*, *The Annals of the Parish*, and *The Entail*, which we have arranged in the order of their appearance.

The first has the demerit of being written in a series of letters, like *Humphrey Clinker*, and in it the young man's letters are, like the young man's in *Humphrey Clinker*, the least entertaining. For my part I hate tales so told. *Redgauntlet* suffers from it, and so does even *Guy Mannering*, though in the latter book Scott indulges his characters less, and snatches the pen out of their hands with less ceremony.

But most of the letters in *The Ayrshire Legatees* are uncommonly amusing: Mrs. Pringle's are funnier than Miss Bramble's, and of Miss Bramble's we have not nearly enough in *Humphrey Clinker*. Dr. Pringle has no counterpart in Mr. Bramble, and he never persecutes us with essays. The doctor really wrote letters, and it was no wonder the Kirk Session of Garnock read them aloud in full “*sederunt*”: they were not often, we may fancy, so well entertained. As for the doctor's daughter she is, at all events, better company than Mr. Bramble's niece.

To give extracts, or pick out specimens, from the letters in *The Ayrshire Legatees*, must be a very inadequate way of trying to give any just idea of their excellence as a whole. No one, to whom Miss Austen was unknown, would arrive at any fair estimate of her singular perfection by reading any extract shorter

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than an entire chapter, and only a whole chapter of *Cranford* would be of any use as a specimen. The more equal to itself a book is throughout, the less does it lend itself to brief quotation: little slips of allusion are for the intimate not for the stranger. To attempt extracts from *The Ayrshire Legatees* is the less necessary that the book was reprinted some years ago by the Macmillans with delightful illustrations by Mr. Charles Brock. Did not his age (or his lack of it) forbid, one would say he must have known Mrs. Glibbans, Mr. Micklewham, and the Pringles.

But with *The Entail*, by far Galt's greatest work, the case is altogether different: no reprint of the book has appeared for many years, and copies of it are rarely met with. There is no other excuse for the neglect of it. How so fine a work of a very peculiar genius should have fallen out of all notice, and out of almost all remembrance, it is hard to say, and cannot be lightly accounted for by merely saying that contemporary taste is bad. There must be a "reading" public with very bad taste or there would be no market for what is, perhaps, most saleable in latter-day fiction; but there must be another reading public with a more healthy appetite, or it would never pay the publishers to reproduce, as they are doing, in large quantities, nearly every novel that ranks in any way as a classic.

When *The Entail* appeared it was not passed over in silence, though it appeared when the world might almost fairly have pleaded the excuse of preoccupation: Sir Walter Scott had taken novel-readers by storm, and was still holding the field against all comers. He himself read *The Entail* thrice, and Byron, whose taste was not identical with his, also read it three times within a few months of its publication. Of one of

its characters he said to Lord Blessington, "The portraiture of Liddy Grippy is, perhaps, the most complete and original that has been added to the female gallery since the days of Shakespeare." Lord Jeffrey, whose praise was seldom so impulsive as Byron's blame, and never so cordially profuse as Scott's praise, spoke and wrote of the new book in terms that were, from him, those of high eulogy.

"Christopher North," himself less universally remembered than he would have liked to foresee, reviewed *The Entail* in *Blackwood* soon after it appeared, and arrived at the judgment that Galt was "inferior only to two living writers of fictitious narratives—to him whom we need not name, and to Miss Edgeworth."

It will readily be taken for granted that anything of Galt's must be inferior to anything of Scott's or of Miss Edgeworth's by those who have never read *The Entail*, and only know their Scott and their Edgeworth as George Eliot's auctioneer knew Latin. But it might puzzle them to tell us in which of their books either Sir Walter or Maria did better than Galt, what he did in *The Entail*. We take leave to think that on his own ground Galt was not beaten by Scott, Miss Edgeworth, or anybody else. To say that he excelled them in the line he chose for himself is not to belittle them in theirs, nor does it imply that he was their equal, much less their superior: Scott was immeasurably greater than Galt as a romanticist, as he was also immeasurably greater than Miss Edgeworth. It is not in romance that she excelled, but in graphic and spontaneous preservation of queer, fresh, and extraordinarily living characters—some of irresistible comedy, and a few of quite poignant pathos. Sir Walter tells a far better tale, and had many more tales

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to tell, but those who love him best love him less for the tales than for the folk with whom he has peopled them.

Galt was not a romanticist of a high order, but, in *The Entail* especially, though by no means in *The Entail* only, he created and kept in vivid, consistent life a great number of characters as original, striking, and real as any in the whole rich treasury of the Waverleys, or any in *Castle Rackrent* and *The Absentee*. They were not borrowed from Scott or from Miss Edgeworth, nor suggested by them, or by any other of Galt's predecessors or contemporaries.

Sir Walter never thought of Leddy Grippy, nor of Watty: had he thought of them he could not have improved them. Scott is fond of lawyers, good and bad; the lawyers, good and bad, in *The Entail*, are as characteristic and, at least, as real and convincing as any in all Scott. In *The Entail* there is one bore, and in her the fell disease takes the Ossianic form than which none could be conceived more fatal. Norna of the Fitful Head had it, though in her the malady had become chronic in the last stages of cure. But Mrs. Eadie is the only bore in *The Entail*, and we suspect Galt put her in out of deference to a now fortunately obsolete fashion. Writers much nearer our own time have also bored the public by not realising how soon a "phase of contemporary thought" becomes a tiresome reminiscence of discarded folly or affectation. We have admitted that Galt as a weaver of romance does not rank specially high; nevertheless there is a romance in *The Entail*, though not of the conventional pattern. It is not the romance of period, or circumstance, or apparatus, but the romance of a fixed idea, and that idea possesses a man who would appear repulsive to any sort of romantic handling. He is not

handsome, nor is he, in any sense, noble; his surroundings are mean, and he is mean; no glamour of stirring times sheds upon him a glow that lay outside himself. There is no pathos of a lost cause ennobling ignorance, no venturing all in a tragic gamble for a forlorn hope that the readers know all along to have been forlorn and hopeless.

Claud Walkinshaw was wholly unlovable as he was entirely selfish, but his selfishness was not of a common sort. He was a money-grubber, and the greed of money made him shamelessly unjust and intolerably cruel, nevertheless he wanted, for himself, neither the pleasures money can buy, nor the mere possession of the shining yellow friends themselves. He only wanted wealth to spend it, but there was only one thing on which he could bear to spend it.

His grandfather was a laird of reduced fortune, to whose family for many generations certain lands had belonged. The last remnant of the ancient patrimony he lost by trying to make a fortune in the Darien scheme. At the same time he lost his only son whom he had sent out in one of the company's ships. The grandson, Claud Walkinshaw, "was scarcely a year old when his father sailed, and his mother died of a broken heart on hearing that her husband, with many of his companions, had perished of disease or famine among the swamps of the mosquito shore. The Kittlestonheugh estate was soon after sold, and the laird, with Claud, retired into Glasgow, where he rented the upper part of a back house in Aird's Close, in the Drygate. The only servant whom in this altered state he could afford to retain, or rather the only one that he could not get rid of, owing to her age and infirmities, was Maudge Dobbie, who, in her youth, was bairns-woman



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to his son. She had been upwards of forty years in the servitude of his house; and the situation she had filled to the father of Claud did not tend to diminish the kindliness with which she regarded the child, especially when, by the ruin of her master, there was none but herself to attend him. . . ." "The solitary old laird had not long been settled in his sequestered and humble town retreat, when a change became visible both in his appearance and manners. He had formerly been bustling, vigorous, hearty, and social; but from the first account of the death of his son, and the ruin of his fortune, he grew thoughtful and sedentary, shunned the approach of strangers, and retired from the visits of his friends. Sometimes he sat for whole days without speaking, and without even noticing the kitten-like gambols of his grandson; at others he would fondle over the child, and caress him with more than a grandfather's affection; again, he would peevishly brush the boy away as he clasped his knees, and hurry out of the house with short and agitated steps. His respectable portliness disappeared; his clothes began to hang loosely upon him; his colour fled; his face withered; and his legs wasted into mere shanks. Before the end of the first twelve months he was either unwilling or unable to move unassisted from the old armchair in which he sat from morning to night, with his grey head drooping over his breast; and one evening, when Maudge went to assist him to undress, she found he had been for some time dead. After the funeral Maudge removed with the penniless orphan to a garret-room in the Saltmarket, where she endeavoured to earn for him and for herself the humble aliment of meal and salt by working stockings. In this condition she remained for some time, pinched

with poverty, but still patient with her lot, and preserving, nevertheless, a neat and decent exterior. It was only in the calm of the Sabbath evenings that she indulged in the luxury of a view of the country; and her usual walk on these occasions, with Claud in her hand, was along the brow of Whitehill, which she perhaps preferred because it afforded her a distant view of the scenes of her happier days; and while she pointed out to Claud the hills and lands of his forefathers, she exhorted him to make it his constant endeavour to redeem them. . . .” Every other lesson the faithful, good woman tried to teach was coldly learned and little remembered: that one lesson became the motive-power of the boy’s life. As a mere child of eleven years old he started pedlar, and grew up “sly and gabby,” frugal, miserly, laborious, and prudent: by the time he was a young man he could have kept his old nurse in decent comfort, but he was too eagerly saving, and left her alone and unvisited. The kind woman, rich then, but herself in fallen fortunes now, who had equipped his pack long ago, would inquire if he gave Maudge any of his winnings, but the old, bed-ridden, dying foster-mother could only say:

“I hope, poor lad, he has more sense than to think o’ the like o’ me. Isna he striving to make a conquest of the lands of his forefathers? Ye ken he’s come o’ gentle blood, and I am nae better than his servan’,” then would she turn herself to the wall and implore the Father of Mercies to prosper his honest endeavours, and that he might ne’er be troubled in his industry with any thought about such a burden as it had pleased heaven to make her to the world.

So old Maudge died, alone and unhelped by the lad who had never known any other mother; but he

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throve and put money together till at last, as a young man, he was able to settle himself in Glasgow as a cloth merchant, and in this trade he prospered too, so that after some years he was able to buy back the farm of Grippy, part of the old estate of Kittlestoneheugh. Adjoining the lands of Grippy lay those of Plealands, whose laird had an only child, Miss Girzy Hypel, who was not so specially attractive as to have been exactly pestered by the importunities of lovers. When her father gave her to understand that he and the laird of Grippy had decided she should become leddy of that ilk she had no objection, and in due course she was married to Claud, and bore him three sons and a daughter. In due course also the laird of Plealands died, entailing that property on his daughter's second son, Watty, which he did because he did not think Charlie, her eldest, would be allowed by Claud to change the name of Walkinshaw for that of Hypel. But as it turned out there was such a flaw in the deed as enabled Watty to have the lands and keep his father's name. Charlie married, for love, a girl of good birth and breeding, but penniless, and old Claud secretly disinherited him by a deed of entail of his own—the entail that gives its name to the book. The laird's mixture of motives in this act of cruelty and injustice are given with singular power and insight. His eldest son's marriage had bitterly angered and disappointed him, but it was not out of mere rancour or revenge that he cheated him of the inheritance: what he could not resist was the temptation to bind together the lands of Grippy and Plealands, to which he could add those of Kilmarkeckle by marrying Watty to Betty Bodle, the only child of the laird of that ilk. The scheme was all the more alluring that he saw his

way to an exchange of Watty's own estate of Plealands for another bit of old Walkinshaw property—the Divet-hill. If Claud could be said to love anyone, he loved his eldest son, the manly, handsome, generous-hearted Charlie; and for poor Watty, more than half daft, he had less than a father's natural affection; but no human affection could weigh against the laird's life-longing—which was that there might be again a Walkinshaw of Kittlestonheugh.

On the way home from the lawyer's office where the entail had been executed, neither Charlie nor Watty understanding aught of its purport, “the old man held no communion with Watty, but now and then rebuked him for hallooing at birds in the hedges, or chasing butterflies, a sport so unbecoming his years,” for Watty was a strapping young man, big and well-favoured, had there been the steady light of reason on his comely face.

In their way they had occasion to pass the end of the path which led to Kilmarkeckle, where Miss Bodle, the heiress, resided with her father, and the laird resolved to put that business in train at once.

“Watty,” he said to his son, “gae thy ways hame by thyself, and tell thy mither I'm gaun up to Kilmarkeckle to hae some discourse wi' Mr. Bodle, so that she needna weary if I dinna come hame to my dinner.”

“Ye had better come hame,” said Watty, “for there's a sheep's head in the pat wi' a cuff o' the neck like ony Glasgow bailie's:—Ye'll no get the like o't at Kilmarkeckle, where the kail's sae thin that every pile o' barley runs roun' the dish bobbing and bidding gude-day to its neighbour.”

Claud had turned into the footpath from the main road, but there was something in this speech which did

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more than provoke his displeasure; and he said aloud, with an air of profound dread, "I hope the Lord can forgie me for what I hae done for this fool."

Watty remembered that the Leedy o' Grippy, his mother, had warned him to sign no papers, and he had signed only for the guinea his father had promised him; he began now, with obstreperous sobs and wails, to weep and cry, "My father and our Charlie hae fastened on me the black bargain o' a law-plea to wrang me o' auld daddy's mailing."

For Claud had not dared to tell even his wife of the iniquity he proposed against their eldest son, though Charlie was not the leddy's favourite—indeed, so far, she had been taking Watty's part against his father's "mislikening."

Knowing whom he had really cozened, Claud was for a few moments overpowered by a sense of shame and dread: the idiocy of the heir he had made had never so horribly disgusted him before: it seemed as if the hand of heaven had fallen more heavily on him.

The old man sat down on a low dry-stone wall by the wayside and confessed, with clasped hands and bitter tears, "that he doubted he had committed a great sin."

It was but a brief glint of repentance. Hearing someone approaching, he lifted his stick and moved on towards Kilmarkeckle. Before he had gone many paces a hand was laid on his shoulder, and he looked round. It was Watty, with his hat folded together in his hand.

"Father," said the fool, "I hae catched a muckle bumbee; will ye help me haud it till I take out the honey blob?"

"I'll go hame, Watty, I'll go hame," was the only

answer Claud made in an accent of extreme sorrow.  
“I’ll go hame. I daur do nae mair this day.”

And he went back with Watty as far as the main road, where, having again recovered his self-possession, he said:

“I’m dafter than thee to gang on in this fool gait; go, as I bade thee, hame and tell thy mother no to look for me to dinner: for I’ll aiblins bide wi’ Kilmarkeckle.”

And he went to Kilmarkeckle and arranged the preliminaries of Watty’s marriage with Betty Bodle. Kilmarkeckle was willing and the young woman was not shy. Shyness was no part of her character—nor timidity. When the Grippy bull broke fence and bore down upon the Kilmarkeckle bull, who but she rushed forth with a flail to prevent the combat?

Nor did Watty dislike the notion of marrying and setting up house, as he supposed, on his own account at the Plealands. Here is the first chapter of his wooing:—being taken by his father to ingratiate himself with his destined bride, Kilmarkeckle proposed to leave the young people alone.

“We’ll leave you to yoursel’s,” said Kilmarkeckle jocularly, “and, Watty, be brisk wi’ her, lad; she can thole a touzle, I’se warrant.”

This exhortation had, however, no immediate effect; for Walter, from the moment she made her appearance, looked awkward and shamefaced, swinging his hat between his legs, with his eyes fixed on the brazen head of the tongs, which were placed upright astraddle in front of the grate; but every now and then he peeped at her from the corner of his eye with a queer and luscious glance, which, while it amused, deterred her for some time from addressing him. Diffidence, however, had nothing to do with the character of Miss

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Betty Bodle, and a feeling of conscious superiority soon overcame the slight embarrassment which arose from the novelty of her situation.

Observing the perplexity of her lover, she suddenly started from her seat, and advancing briskly towards him, touched him on the shoulder, saying:

"Watty, I say, Watty, what's your will wi' me?"

"Nothing," was the reply, while he looked up knowingly in her face.

"What are fear't for? I ken what ye're come about," said she, "my father has tell't me."

At these encouraging words he leaped from his chair with an alacrity unusual to his character, and attempted to take her in his arms; but she nimbly escaped from his clasp, giving him, at the same time, a smart slap on the cheek.

"That's no fair, Betty Bodle," cried the lover, rubbing his cheek and looking somewhat offended and afraid.

"Then what gart you meddle with me?" replied the bouncing girl, with a laughing bravery that soon re-invigorated his love.

"I'm sure I was na' gaun to do you ony harm," was the reply,—“no, sure as death, Betty, I would rather cut my finger than do you ony scaith, for I like you weel—I canna tell you how weel; but, if ye'll tak' me, I'll mak' you the leddy o' the Plealands in a jiffy.” He took her by the hand, looking, however, away from her, as if he was not aware of what he had done. . . . Miss Betty was the first to break silence.

"Weel, Watty," said she, "what are ye going to say to me?"

"Na, it's your turn to speak noo. I hae spoken my mind, Betty Bodle. Eh, this is a bonny hand; and what a sonsy arm ye hae. I could amaist bite your cheek, Betty Bodle, I could."

"Gude preserve me, Watty, ye're like a wud dog."

She pushed him away with such vigour that he collapsed into her father's chair.

“I redde ye, Watty, keep your distance. Man and wife’s man and wife; but I’m only Betty Bodle and ye’re but Watty Walkinshaw.”

“Od, Betty” (rubbing his elbow that he had hurt in his fall), “ye’re desperate strong, woman; and what were ye the waur o’ a bit slaik o’ a kiss? Howsever, my bonny dawty, we’ll no cast out for a’ that; for if ye’ll just marry me, and I’m sure ye’ll no get anybody that can like ye half so weel, I’ll do anything ye bid me; as sure as death I will—there’s my hand, Betty Bodle, I will; and I’ll buy you the bravest satin gown in a’ Glasgow, wi’ far bigger flowers on’t than any ane in a’ Mrs. Bailie Nicol Jarvie’s aught; and we’ll live in the Plealands House, and do naething frae dawn to dark but shoo ane another on a swing between the twa trees on the green; and I’ll be as kind to you, Betty Bodle, as I can be, and buy you likewise a side-saddle, and a pony to ride on; and when the winter comes, sowing the land wi’ hailstones to grow frost and snaw, we’ll sit cosily at the chimley-lug, and I’ll read you a chapter o’ the Bible, or aiblins Patie and Roger—as sure’s death I will, Betty Bodle.”

They were duly and soon married, and the description of their wedding neither Smollett nor Scott could have bettered, but Watty’s wedded bliss was short-lived. Not a year was gone by when one evening, as Claud sat on his wonted bench outside the house of Grippy, he saw Walter coming. There was something unwonted in his appearance and gestures.

At one moment he rushed forward several steps, with a strange wildness of air. He would then stop and wring his hands, gaze upwards, as if he wondered at some extraordinary phenomenon in the sky; but seeing nothing, he dropped his hands, and at his ordinary pace came slowly up the hill. When he came within a few paces of the bench, he halted, and looked

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with such an open and innocent sadness, that even the heart of his father throbbed with pity and was melted to a degree of softness and compassion.

"What's the matter wi' thee, Watty?" said he with unusual kindness. The poor natural, however, made no reply, but continued to gaze at him with the same inexpressible simplicity of grief.

"Hast t'ou lost anything, Watty?"

"I dinna ken," was the answer, followed by a burst of tears.

"Surely something dreadful has befallen thee, lad," said Claud to himself, alarmed at the astonishment of sorrow with which his faculties seemed to be bound up.

"Canst t'ou no tell me what has happened, Watty?"

In about the space of half a minute Walter moved his eyes slowly round, as if he saw and followed something which filled him with awe and dread. He then suddenly checked himself and said: "It's naething—she's no there."

"Sit down beside me, Watty, sit down beside me, and compose thyself."

Walter did as he was bidden, and, stretching out his feet, hung forward in such a posture of extreme listlessness and helpless despondency that all power of action appeared to be withdrawn.

Claud rose, and believing he was only under the influence of some of those silly passions to which he was occasionally subject, moved to go away, when Watty looked up and said:

"Father, Betty Bodle's dead—my Betty Bodle's dead!"

"Dead!" said Claud, thunderstruck.

"Ay, father, she's dead! My Betty Bodle's dead!"

"Dost t'ou ken what t'ou's saying?" But Walter, without attending to the question, repeated with an accent of tenderness still more simple and touching:

"My Betty Bodle's dead! She's awa' up aboon the skies yon'er, and left me a wee wee baby;" in saying which he again burst into tears, and, rising hastily

from the bench, ran wildly back towards the Divethill House.

The old man followed and found poor Betty Bodle had indeed died—in giving birth to a *daughter*, and to her the Divethill must belong, so that the reunited Kittlestonheugh property must again be divided. Already the old man was scheming how to get the better of the Providence that seemed against his plans. Watty was pliant, and must marry again, and have a son. But Watty’s pliancy was changed to a witless obstinacy. He was henceforth fiercely suspicious of the rights of his “wee Betty Bodle.” At first he sat by his dead wife, with hands folded and head drooping.

He made no answer to any question; but as often as he heard the infant’s cry, he looked towards the bed, and said with an accent of indescribable sadness, “My Betty Bodle!”

When the coffin arrived, his mother wished him to leave the room, apprehensive, from the profound grief in which he was plunged, that he might break out into some extravagances of passion, but he refused; and, when it was brought in, he assisted with singular tranquillity in the ceremonial of the coffining. But when the lid was lifted, and placed over the body, and the carpenter was preparing to fasten it down for ever, he shuddered for a moment from head to foot, and, raising it with his left hand, he took a last look at the face, removing the veil with his right, and touching the cheek as if he had hoped still to feel some ember of life: but it was cold and stiff.

“She’s clay noo,” said he. “There’s nane o’ my Betty Bodle here.”

And he turned away with a careless air, as if he had no further interest in the scene. From that

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moment his artless affections took another direction. He immediately quitted the death-room, and, going to the nursery where the infant lay asleep in the nurse's lap, he contemplated it for some time, and then, with a cheerful and happy look and tone, said, "It's a wee Betty Bodle, and it's my Betty Bodle noo." He would not leave his baby, and when they bade him dress and make ready to perform the husband's customary part in the funeral he refused to quit the child or take any part in the burial.

"I canna understan'," said he, "what for a' this fykerie's about a lump o' yird. Sho'el't intil a hole, and no fash me."

"It's your wife, my lad," said the leddy; "ye'll surely never refuse to carry her head in a gudeman-like manner to the kirkyard."

"Na, na, mother, Betty Bodle's my wife; yon clod in the black kist is but her auld boddice; and when she flang it off, she put on this bonny wee new cleiding o' clay," said he, pointing to the baby. . . .

"What's t'ou doing there like a hussy fellow?" said Claud. "Rise and get on thy mournings, and behave wiselike, and leave the bairn to the women."

"It's my bairn," replied Watty, "and ye hae nae-thing, father, to do wi't. Will I no tak' care o' my ain baby—my bonny wee Betty Bodle?"

"Do as I bid thee, or I'll maybe gar thee fin' the weight o' my staff," said his father sharply. . . . The widower looked him steadily in the face and said:

"I'm a father noo; it would be an awfu' thing for a decent grey-headed man like you, father, to strike the head o' a motherless family."

"There's a judgment in this!" cried Claud, "and if there's power in the law o' Scotland, I'll gar thee rue sic dourness. Get up, I say, and put on thy mournings, or I'll hae thee cognost and sent to Bedlam."

"I'm sure I look for nae mair at your hands, father," replied Walter simply, "for my mither has often tell't me, when ye hae been sitting sour and sulky in the

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nook, that ye wouldna begrudge crowns and pounds to make me *compos mentis* for the benefit o' Charlie.”

Every pulse in the veins of Claud stood still at this stroke, and he staggered, overwhelmed with shame, remorse, and indignation, into a seat.

The reader needs not to be reminded that the wretched father had beggared his first-born altogether and given his inheritance to this poor natural. Charlie had a son and a daughter of his own now, though Watty had a daughter only. Geordie, Claud's third son, married too, and after the birth of a daughter his wife fell into a sickly state, and no other issue could reasonably be expected of his marriage. Claud's daughter also married, to the laird of Dirdumwhamle, and had a son. And now perhaps we should see exactly how the Entailer had settled his estates. They were, then, entailed in the first instance on Watty, his second son, and his heirs male; then on Geordie, the third son, and his heirs male, then upon the heirs male of Charlie, his eldest son; and, finally, failing all these, on the heirs general of his daughter Margaret.

Now the leddy o' Grippy began match-making in her own mind, as her husband was always doing; but, alas! their schemes by no means tallied—hers was that Margaret's son should, when he was grown up, marry Watty's daughter, whereas Claud hoped that by the marriage of Charlie's son with Watty's daughter the estate might still be kept together in the hands of a Walkinshaw.

Meanwhile Charlie was in debt and tried to borrow the not very grievous sum of two hundred pounds to put himself right again. He went to Mr. Keelevin, the honest lawyer, who had drawn the entail, and had drawn it with vehement and solemn expostulation,

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and saw, probably, no great difficulty in raising so modest a sum on his prospects as eldest son and heir of an increasingly wealthy father. It was only now that he learned he had no prospects—and within a few weeks he was dead, broken in heart and hope. While he was dying Mr. Keelevin went out to the Grippy and attacked the old laird again, himself sick and sorry now. The entail could not be altered, but Claud had "lying siller" in plenty, and the kind lawyer was strongly determined to do all he could to force him to make, out of it, all possible compensation to his disinherited first-born.

The leddy, still ignorant of Charlie's disinheritance, was equally resolved to secure a settlement in money for herself. Watty was only resolved on one thing—to sign no paper whatever lest he might injure his wee Betty Bodle.

The news of Charlie's death brought Claud at last to a dour and desperate repentance. For his fatherless grandchildren he did make up his mind to do all possible; but Claud's own days were numbered. He was already marked for death on the day when he laid his first-born in the grave. A day or two later Mr. Keelevin appeared at the Grippy with the papers, but the laird was speechless, though fully conscious and eagerly willing to sign them. Doctor and leddy had been summoned, but the former declared Claud's case hopeless. The latter arrived, drenched to the skin, from visiting her son's widow in Glasgow. And now, rushing in, she found the lawyer with his papers, looking everywhere for ink and pens.

"What's wrong noo?" she cried. "What new judgment has befallen us? Whatna fearfu' image is that

that's making a' this rippet for the cheatin' instruments o' pen and ink, when a dying man's at his last gasp?"

"Mrs. Walkinshaw," said the lawyer, "for heaven's sake be quiet. Your gudeman kens very weel what I hae read to him. It's a provision for Mrs. Charles and her orphans."

"But is there no likewise a provision for me in't?" cried the leddy. . . . "Ye's get neither pen nor ink here, Mr. Keelevin, till my rights are cognost in a record o' sederunt and session."

"Hush!" exclaimed the doctor. All was silent, and every eye turned on the patient, whose countenance was again hideously convulsed. A troubled groan struggled and heaved for a moment in his breast, and was followed by a short quivering through his whole frame.

"It's all over," said the doctor.

When the laird's funeral was over, Geordie, selfish and cool as he was, did try to persuade Watty into making some provision for their elder brother's widow and orphans.

"If my father," said Walter, "did sic' a wicked thing to Charlie as ye a' say, what for would ye hae me to do as ill and as wrang to my ain bairn? Isna wee Betty Bodle my first-born, and, by course o' nature and law, she has a right to a' I hae; what for then would ye hae me to mak' away wi' onything that pertains to her? I'll no' be guilty o' any sic' sin."

Geordie urged that their father had, in fact, intended to provide for his daughter-in-law and grandchildren, that it was but a chance the bond of provision was not signed.

"Ye may say sae, Geordie," retorted Watty, "in your cracks at the yarn-club o'er the punch-bowl, but I

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think it was the will o' Providence; for, had it been ordain't that Bell and her weans were to get a part o' father's gear they would hae gotten't: but ye saw the Lord took him to Abraham's bosom before the bond was signed, which was a clear proof and testimony to me, that it doesna stand wi' the pleasure o' heaven that she should get onything. She'll get nothing frae me."

The leddy, in all the pomp of her new weeds, who was at the table, with the tenth chapter of Nehemiah open before her, here interposed.

"Wheesht, wheesht, Watty, and dinna blaspheme," said she, "and no be ou'erly condumacious—' whosoever giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord.'"

"That," said Watty, "is what I canna comprehend; for the Lord has no need to borrow. He can mak' a world o' gold for the poor folk if He likes; and if He keeps them in poortith, He has His ain reasons for't."

"Ah! weel I wat," exclaimed the leddy pathetically, "noo I find to my cost that my cousin, Ringan Gilhaise . . . had the rights o't when he plead my father's will on account of *concos montis*."

This gave a hint to the wily Geordie, who began thenceforth to feel his way to a setting aside of his brother, as an idiot, in which case he, as next heir of entail, would have the management of the estates. Poor Watty gave him chance enough. His wee Betty Bodle, a premature and sickly child, presently dwindled out of life, and Watty stole his elder brother's little girl and dressed her in his own bairn's clothes, calling her his "third Betty Bodle." And the leddy was now against him, for he would give her no money for house or board, and he had brought his brother's widow and her son to live at the Grippy—telling her that, since she was finer bred than his mother, she had better manage things and be "leddy," as he had no wife of his

own. When the young widow perceived that plots were afoot against her benefactor she bade him go and tell Mr. Keelevin and take his counsel.

“She has acted a true friend’s part,” said the lawyer. “And I would advise you, Mr. Walter, to keep out of harm’s way, and no gang in the gate o’ the gleds as ye ca’ them.”

“Hae ye ony ark or crannie, Mr. Keelevin, where a body might den himsel’ till they’re out o’ the gate and away?” cried Walter timidly, and looking anxiously round the room.

“Ye shouldna’ speak sic havers, Mr. Walter, but conduct yourself mair like a man,” said his legal friend grievedly; “. . . tak’ my advice and speak till them as little as possible.”

“I’ll no say ae word—I’ll be a dumbie; I’ll sit as quiet as ony ane o’ the images afore Bailie Glasford’s house. King William himsel’, on his bell-metal horse at the Cross, is a popular preacher, Mr. Keelevin, compared to what I’ll be.”

It was too true. There was to be a legal inquiry into Watty’s mental capacity. Of the first day’s proceedings, when other witnesses were examined, we need say nothing here. Nothing very materially adverse was elicited against the poor young man’s sanity.

Next day Watty appeared, dressed in his best, handsome and only showing a reasonable anxiety and interest.

“You are Mr. Walkinshaw, I believe?” said the adverse counsel, Mr. Threeper, when Watty had come forward as bidden, and made his slow and profound bow to sheriff and jury.

“I believe I am,” said Watty timidly.

“What are you, Mr. Walkinshaw?”



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"A man, sir; my mother and brother want to mak' me a daft ane."

"How do you suspect them of any such intentions?"

"Because, ye see, I'm here. I wouldna' hae been here but for that."

"Then do you think you are a daft man?"

"Nobody thinks himsel' daft. I daresay ye think ye're just as wise as me."

A roar of laughter shook the court, and Threeper blushed and was disconcerted; but he soon resumed tartly:

"Upon my word, Mr. Walkinshaw, you have a good opinion of yourself. I should like to know for what reason?"

"That's a droll question to speer at a man," said Walter; "a poll-parrot thinks weel o' itsel', which is but a feathered creature, and short o' the capacity o' man by twa hands."

Mr. Keelevin trembled and grew pale; and the advocate, recovering full possession of his assurance, proceeded:

"And so ye think, Mr. Walkinshaw, that the two hands make all the difference between a man and a parrot?"

"No, no, sir," replied Watty, "I dinna think that—for ye ken the beast has feathers."

"And why have not men feathers?"

"That's no a right question, sir, to put to the like o' me, a weak human creature,—you should ask their Maker," said Walter gravely.

The advocate was again repulsed; . . . George sat shivering from head to foot: a buzz of satisfaction pervaded the whole court.

"Well, but not to meddle with such mysteries," said Mr. Threeper, assuming a jocular tone, "I suppose you think yourself a very clever fellow?"

"At some things," replied Walter modestly, "but I dinna like to mak' a roos o' mysel'."

“And pray now, Mr. Walkinshaw, may I ask what you think you do best?”

“Man! an’ ye could see how I can sup curds and cream—there’s no ane in a’ the house can ding me.”

The sincerity and exultation with which this was expressed convulsed the court, and threw the advocate completely on his beam-ends. However, he soon righted, and proceeded:

“I don’t doubt your ability in that way, Mr. Walkinshaw; and I daresay you can play a capital knife and fork.”

“I’m better at the spoon,” replied Walter, laughing.

“Well, I must confess you are a devilish clever fellow.”

“Mair sae, I’m thinking, than ye thought, sir. But noo, since,” continued Walter, “ye hae speer’t sae many questions at me, will ye answer one yoursel’?”

“Oh, I can have no possible objection to do that, Mr. Walkinshaw.”

“Then,” said Walter, “how muckle are ye to get frae my brother for this job?”

Again the court was convulsed, and the questioner again disconcerted.

“I suspect, brother Threeper,” said the sheriff, “that you are in the wrong box.”

“I suspect so, too,” replied the advocate, laughing; but, addressing himself again to Walter, he said:

“You have been married, Mr. Walkinshaw?”

“Ay, auld Doctor Denholm married me to Betty Bodle.”

“And pray where is she?”

“Her mortal remains, as the headstone says, lie in the kirkyard.”

The countenance of Mr. Keelevin became pale and anxious. George and his counsel exchanged smiles of gratulation.

“You had a daughter?” said the advocate, looking knowingly to the jury, who sat listening with greedy ears.

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"I had," said Walter, and glanced anxiously towards his agent.

"And what became of your daughter?"

No answer was immediately given. Walter hung his head and seemed troubled; he sighed deeply, and again turned his eye inquiringly to Mr. Keelevin. Almost every one present sympathised with his emotion, and ascribed it to parental sorrow.

"I say," resumed the advocate, "what became of your daughter?"

"I canna answer that question."

The simple accent in which this was uttered interested all in his favour still more and more.

"Is she dead?" said the pertinacious Mr. Threeper.

"Folk said sae; and what everybody says maun be true."

"Then you don't, of your own knowledge, know the fact?"

"Before I can answer that, I would like to ken what a fact is."

The counsel shifted his ground, without noticing the question, and said:

"But I understand, Mr. Walkinshaw, you have still a child that you call Betty Bodle?"

"And what business hae ye wi' that?" said the natural, offended; "I never saw sic a stock o' impudence as ye hae in my life."

"I did not mean to offend you, Mr. Walkinshaw; I was only anxious, for the ends of justice, to know if you consider the child you call Betty Bodle as your daughter?"

"I'm sure," replied Walter, "that the ends o' justice would be muckle better served an ye would hae done wi' your speering."

"It is, I must confess, strange that I cannot get a direct answer from you, Mr. Walkinshaw. Surely, as a parent, you should know your child!" exclaimed the advocate peevishly.

"An I was a mother ye might say sae."

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Mr. Threeper began to feel that hitherto he had made no impression. After conferring with George's agent he resumed:

“I do not wish, Mr. Walkinshaw, to harass your feelings; but I am not satisfied with the answer you have given respecting your child. . . . Is the little girl that lives with you your daughter?”

“I dinna like to gie you any satisfaction on that head; for Mr. Keelevin said ye would bother me if I did.”

“Ah! have I caught you at last?”

A murmur of disappointment ran through all the court, and Walter looked around coweringly and afraid.

“So, Mr. Keelevin has primed you, has he? He has instructed you what to say?”

“No,” said the poor natural, “he instructed me to say nothing.”

“Then why did he tell you that I would bother you?”

“I dinna ken; speer at himsel’; there he sits.”

“No, sir! I ask you,” said the advocate grandly.

“I’m wearied, Mr. Keelevin,” said Walter helplessly, as he looked towards his disconsolate agent. “May I no come away?”

The honest lawyer gave a deep sigh; to which all the spectators sympathisingly responded.

“Mr. Walkinshaw,” said the sheriff, “don’t be alarmed—we are all friendly disposed towards you; but it is necessary, for the satisfaction of the jury, that you should tell us what you think respecting the child that lives with you.”

Walter smiled and said, “I hae nae objection to converse wi’ a weel-bred gentleman like you; but that barking terrier in the wig, I can thole him no longer.”

“Well, then, is the little girl your daughter?”

“Deed is she—my ain dochter.”

“How can that be, when, as you acknowledged, everybody said your dochter was dead?”

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"But I kent better mysel'—my bairn and dochter, ye see, sir, was lang a weakly baby, aye bleating like a lambie that has lost its mother; and she dwined and dwindled, and moaned and grew sleepy, sleepy, and then she closed her wee bonny een and lay still; and I sat beside her three days and three nights, watching her a' the time, never lifting my een frae her face, that was as sweet to look on as a gowan in a lown May morning. But, I kenna how it came to pass—I thought, as I looked at her, that she was changed, and there began to come a kirkyard smell frae the bed, that was just as if the hand o' nature was wishing me to gae away; and then I saw, wi' the eye o' my heart, that my brother's wee Mary was grown my wee Betty Bodle, and so I gaed and brought her hame in my arms, and she is noo my dochter. But my mother has gaen on at me like a randy ever sin' syne, and wants me to put away my ain bairn, which I will never, never do. No, sir, I'll stand by her, and guard her, though fifty mothers, and fifty times fifty brother Geordies were to flyte at me frae morning to night."

One of the jury here interposed, and asked several questions relative to the management of the estates; by the answers to which it appeared, not only that Walter had never taken any charge whatever, but that he was totally ignorant of business, and even of the most ordinary money transactions. The jury then turned and laid their heads together; the legal gentlemen spoke across the table, and Walter was evidently alarmed at the bustle. In the course of two or three minutes, the foreman returned a verdict of fatuity. The poor laird shuddered, and, looking at the sheriff, said, in an accent of simplicity that melted every heart, "Am I found guilty? Oh surely, sir, ye'll no hang me, for I couldna help it."

If any trial scene in fiction is more simply touching than this, more life-like and less strained, I can only say I do not know where to find it.

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But if poor Watty is the most pathetic figure in *The Entail*, his mother, the leddy, is the most entertaining and the most eccentric. It is only after Watty's "trial" that she appears in all her glory. Already there have been inimitable scenes between her and her husband, her and Watty, her and Geordie; but her full peony-bloom is reserved for the second half of this wonderful book, of which we have dealt only with the first. If we are to deal with her at all, it must clearly be in another paper.

## THE LEDDY O' GRIPPY

### ANOTHER APPRECIATION

IN the former paper dealing with John Galt's *Entail* it was not possible to give the Leddy o' Grippy the elbow-room her peculiar qualities demand and her importance deserves. She takes her place among the *Dramatis Personæ* of the book quite early in its course, but, as it continues, to Galt himself she becomes more and more irresistible, and she gets more and more of her own way, to the reader's immense pleasure. There is not the slightest necessity for any indication on our part of her remarkable talents and qualities, as they speak for themselves.

The reader should, however, in order that he may fully understand what share she had in promoting the general misery of the piece, be reminded briefly of the story set forth in the *Entail*.

Claud Walkinshaw was the penniless grandson of a broken laird, in whose hands the last remains of a once good estate had melted to nothing. The old laird died, and the child was supported by the frugal devotion of a faithful nurse, from whom he might have learned noble lessons of self-sacrifice, from whom he did learn only to dedicate his life to the recovery of some part at least of the lost inheritance. That there should be again a Walkinshaw of the Kittlestonheugh was the ambition to which he sacrificed natural justice and

natural affection. Beginning as a pedlar, he scraped together, by the time he was a man, enough to set himself up in regular trade: and presently he was able to buy back one farm, the Grippy, which had formed part of the ancestral inheritance. Now, he resolved to marry, and beget children, and entail the property, that none of his descendants might have it in their power to commit the imprudence which had brought his grandfather to a morsel, and thrown himself on the world. After maturely considering the prospects of all the heiresses within the probable scope of his ambition, he resolved that his affection should be directed towards Miss Girzy Hypel, the only daughter of Malachi Hypel, the laird of Plealands.

The young woman was his distant kinswoman, and her father, who loved law, had come into Glasgow to attend the judges' circuit. He came to congratulate Claud on the *re-conquest* of a part of his family estate.

"I hear," said the laird, "that ye hae gotten a sappy bargain o' the Grippy. It's true some o' the lands are but cauld; however, cousin, ne'er fash your thumb, Glasgow's on the thrive, and ye hae as mony een in your head for an advantage as ony body I ken. But now that ye hae gotten a house, wha's to be the leddy? I'm sure ye nicht do waur than cast a sheep's e'e in at our door; my dochter Girzy's o' your ain flesh and blood; I dinna see ony moral impossibility in her becoming, as the Psalmist says, 'bone of thy bone.'"

Claud replied in his wonted couthy manner, "Nane o' your jokes, laird—me even mysel' to your dochter! Na, na, Plealands, that canna be thought o' nowadays. But, no to make a ridicule of sic a solemn concern, it's vera true that, hadna my grandfather, when he was grown doited, sent out a' the Kittlestonheugh

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in a cargo o' playocks to the Darien, I might hae been in a state and condition to look at Miss Girzy; but, ye ken, I hae a lang clue to wind before I maun think o' playing the ba' wi' Fortune, in ettling so far aboun my reach."

"Snuffs o' tobacco!" exclaimed the laird. "Are ye nae sib to oursel's? If ye dinna fail by your ain blateness, our Girzy's surely no past speaking to. Just lay your leg, my man, over a side o' horse flesh, and come your ways, some Saturday, to speer her price."

Finding Miss Girzy within his grasp Claud was in the less hurry, and cast about for a wealthier match; but, failing, he determined to take what he could get; and to that end wrote to Plealands, proposing a visit—and also sent for a tailor to make him a new coat. The tailor was an elder of the Tron Kirk, and had much to say of the backslidings of the times, but opined that a remnant might be saved.

"Talking," said Claud, "o' remnants, I hae a bit blue o' superfine; it has been lang on hand, and the moths are beginning to meddle wi't—I won'er if ye could mak me a coat o't."

The coat was made and our lover of forty-seven rode forth on his wooing. He was not wont to ride, and his hired steed was not much wont to be ridden in his fashion. As Claud confessed, "Twa dyers wi' their beetles couldna hae done me mair detriment." However, he did arrive at Plealands House, and as they went into dinner, "Girzy," said the laird, "gae to thy bed and bring a cod for Mr. Walkinshaw, for he'll no can thole to sit down on our hard chairs."

Girzy laughed, and returned with the pillow, which she herself placed in one of the armchairs, shaking and patting it into plumpness, as she said, "Come round

here, Mr. Walkinshaw. I trow ye'll find this a safe easy seat. Weel do I ken what it is to be saddle-sick mysel'. Lordsake! when I gaed in ahint my father to see the robber hanged at Ayr, I was for mair than three days as if I had sat down on a heckle." When dinner was done and Girzy and her mother had left them, the two lairds fell to bargaining.

"Weel, Grippy," said Plealands, "but I'm blithe to see you here; and, if I'm no mista'en, Girzy will no be ill to woo. Isna she a coothy and kind creature? She'll mak you a capital wife. Man, it would do your heart good to hear how she rants among the servan' lasses. Lazy sluts that would like nothing better than to live at heck and manger, and bring their master to a morsel; but I trow Girzy gars them keep a trig house and a birring wheel."

"No doubt, laird," replied Claud, "but it's a comfort to hae a frugal woman for a helpmate; but, ye ken, nowadays it's no the fashion for bare legs to come thegither. The wife maun hae something to put in the pot as well as the man; and although Miss Girzy mayna be a' thegither objectionable, yet it would still be a pleasant thing, baith to hersel' and the man that gets her, an ye would just gie a bit inkling o' what she'll hae."

"Isna she my only dochter? That's a proof in test that she'll get a'. Naebody needs to be telled, man."

"Vera true, laird; but the leddy's life is in her lip, and, if ony thing were happening to her, ye're a hale man, and wha ken's what would be the upshot o' a second marriage?"

"That's looking far ben," replied the laird.

However, he and Claud came to terms, and, in little more than a month, Miss Girzy was translated into the

Leddy of Gippy. In due course she blest her husband with a son, Charles, and on him the Gippy was at first entailed, but not the Plealands, for the grandfather would only settle it on a son of his daughter's who should take the name of Hypel, and of that Claud would not hear yet. So that when Watty arrived the Plealands was entailed on him—all of which has been told in our former paper.

At first the ledly was fonder of poor Watty than of his elder or younger brother, or of her daughter, and often enraged Claud by her praise of him.

"I won'er to hear you, gudeman," exclaimed the ledly one day—her father was now dead, and it was intolerable to Claud to think that Watty should have the Plealands, and that it could not be joined with Gippy—"I won'er to hear ye aye mislikening Watty that gait; he's a weel-tempered laddie, liltin' like a linty at the door-cheek frae morning to night."

"Singing, Girzy! I'm really distressed to hear you; to ca' yon singing; it's nothing but lal, lal, lal, lal, wi' a bow and a bend backwards and forwards. As if the creature hadna the gumshion o' the cuckoo, the whilk has a note mair in its sang, although it has but twa."

"It's an innocent sang for a' that . . . but ye hae just a spite at the bairn, gudeman, 'cause my father has made him heir o' the Plealands. That's the gospel truth o' your being so fain to gar folk trow that my Watty's daft."

"Ye're daft, gudewife . . . there are degrees o' capacity, Girzy, and Watty's, poor callan, we maun alloo between oursel's, has been meted by a sma' measure."

"Weel, if ever I heard the like o' that! If the Lord has dealt the brains o' our family in mutchkins and chapins, it's my belief that Watty got his in the biggest

stoup . . . he can say his questions without missing a word, as far as what is forbidden in the Tenth Commandment? And I ne'er hae been able to get his brother beyond 'What is effectual calling?'"

"That's the vera thing . . . the callan can get ony thing by heart, but, after all, he's just like a book, for everything he learns is dead within him, and he's ne'er a prin's worth the wiser o't. But it's some satisfaction to me, that, since your father would be so unreasonably obstinate as to make away the Plealands past Charlie, he'll be punished in the gouk he's chosen for heir."

"Gude guide us! isna that gouk yer ain bairn?" exclaimed the indignant mother. "Surely the man's fey about his entails and his properties, to speak o' the ill-less laddie as if it were no better than a stot or a stirk!—Ye'll no hae the power to wrang my wean while the breath o' life's in my body; so I redde ye, tak tent to what ye try."

"Girzy, t'ou has a head and so has a nail."

"Gudeman, ye hae a tongue and so has a bell."

The leddy henceforth had it fixed in her mind that Claud meant, if he could, to disinherit Watty of the Plealands; but, as he could not do that, and discovered that Watty, through a flaw in the wording of the settlement, need not take the name of Hypel, he did in fact disinherit Charles, so that Grippy and Plealands might keep together. Of this the leddy herself was kept in ignorance, for, though Claud did it, he was ashamed of it. When old Plealands died the minister of that parish betook himself, with his wife, to Grippy to condole with the leddy.

"Nothing," observed Dr. Kilfuddy, "is so uncertain as the things of time. This dispensation which has been vouchsafed, Mrs. Walkinshaw, to you and yours

is an earnest of what we have all to look for in this world. But we should not be overly cast down by it, but lippen to eternity. . . . Your father, I am blithe to hear, has died in better circumstances than could be expected considering the trouble he has had wi' his lawing, leaving, as they say, the estate clear of debt, and a heavy soom of lying siller."

"My father, Mr. Kilfuddy, was, as you well know, a most worthy character, and I'll no say hasna left a nest-egg, the Lord be thankit, and we maun compose oursel's to thole wi' what He has been pleased, in His gracious ordinance, to send upon us for the advantage of our poor sinful souls. But the burial has cost the gudeman a power o' money; for my father, being the head o' a family, we hae been obligated to put a' the servants, baith here, at the Grippy, and at the Plealands, in full deep mourning, and to hing the front o' the laft in the kirk, as ye'll see next Sabbath, wi' a very handsome black cloth, the whilk cost twenty pence the ell, first cost out o' the gudeman's ain shop; but, considering wha my father was, we could do no less in a' decency."

"And I see," interfered the minister's wife, "that ye hae gotten a bombazeen o' the first quality. Nae doubt ye had it likewise frae Mr. Walkinshaw's own shop."

"Na, mem," replied the mourner, "I was, as ye ken, at the Plealands when my father took his departal to a better world, and sent for my mournings frae Glasgow . . . but it happened to be a day of deluge, so that my whole commodity, on Baldy Slowgaun's cart, was drookit through and through, and baith the crape and bombazeen were rendered as soople as pudding-skins . . . a sight past expression; and obligated me to send

an express to Kilmarnock for the things I hae on, the outlay of whilk was a clean total loss. But, Mr. Kilfuddy, everything in this howling wilderness is ordered for the best; and, if the gudeman has been needcessitated to pay for twa sets o' mournings, yet when he gets what he'll get frae my father's gear, he ought to be very well content that it's nae waur."

"What ye say, Mrs. Walkinshaw," replied the minister, "is very judicious; for it was spoken at the funeral that your father, Plealands, couldna hae left muckle less than three thousand pounds of lying money."

"No, Mr. Kilfuddy, it's no just sae muckle; but I'll no say it's only waur than twa thousand."

"A braw soom, a braw soom," said the spiritual comforter.

At this juncture Watty the heir came rumbling into the room crying:

"Mither, mither! Meg Draiks winna gie me a bit of auld Daddy's burial bread."

"He's a fine spirity bairn," observed Mrs. Kilfuddy; "everybody maun alloo that."

"He's as he came frae the hand o' his Maker," replied the ledly, looking piously towards the minister, "and it's a comfort to think he's so weel provided for by my father."

"Then it's true that he gets a' the Plealands property?"

"Deed is't, sir, and a braw patrimony I trow it will be by the time he arrives at the years o' discretion."

"That's a lang look," rejoined the minister a little slyly.

All this, however, is but a series of hints of what the Leddy o' Grippy was in favouring circumstances to

become. We hope there is no need to repeat what has been said in our former paper, wherein we told of Claud's secret disinheriting of his eldest son, and of the entail he made, whereby both Grippy and Plealands were settled on Watty, and with them the other lands of the old Kittlestonheugh estate he lived to buy back. We read of Claud's own miserable, conscience-stricken death, and of the death of his eldest son Charles, disinherited and broken in spirit. Watty was already a widower, and had lost his one child. George, his younger brother, had only a daughter, and the entail was on his heir male, so that in reality the son of the dead Charles was heir, but no one knew it except George himself, who was anxious to make up a marriage between his daughter Robina and his nephew James Walkinshaw, the rightful heir of entail.

James, however, wanted to marry someone else, and so did Robina, her choice having fallen on another cousin, Walkinshaw Milrookit, son of her aunt Meg, third wife of the laird of Dirdumwhamle. We must for the present, however, return to the afternoon of the day whereon poor Watty had been pronounced *fatuus* by the Court.

The scene in the parlour of Grippy, after the inquiry, was of the most solemn and lugubrious description. The leddy sat in the great chair at the fireside, in all the pomp of woe, wiping her eyes, ever and anon giving vent to the deepest sighs of sorrow. Mrs. Charles, with her son leaning on her knee, occupied another chair, pensive and anxious. George and Mr. Pitwinnoch (his lawyer) sat at the table, taking an inventory of the papers in the scrutoire, and Walter was playfully tickling his adopted daughter on the green before the window, when Mrs. Milrookit (his sister) with

her husband, the laird of Dirdumwhamle, came to sympathise and condole with their friends, and to ascertain what would be the pecuniary consequences of the decision to them.

"Come awa', my dear," said the leddy, "and tak a seat beside me. Your poor brother, Watty, has been weighed in the balance o' the sheriff and found wanting; and his vessels o' gold and silver, as I may say in the words o' Scripture, are carried away into captivity; for I understand that George gets no proper right to them, as I expeckit, but is obligated to keep them in custody, in case Watty should hereafter come to years o' discretion. Hech, Meg! but this is a sair day for us a', and for nane mair than your afflicted gude-sister there [Charles Walkinshaw's widow] and her twa bairns [whom poor daft Watty had housed since old Claud's death]. She'll be under a needcessity to gang back and live again wi' my mother, now in her ninety-third year, and by course o' nature drawing near her latter end."

"And what's to become of you?" replied Mrs. Milrookit.

"O, I'll hae to bide here, and tak care o' everything, and an alimant will be alloo't to me for keeping poor Watty. Hech, sirs! wha would hae thought it, that sic a fine lad as he ance was, and preferred by his honest father as the best able to keep the property right, would hae been thus, by decret o' court, proven a born idiot?"

"But," interrupted Mrs. Milrookit, glancing compassionately towards her sister-in-law, "I think, since so little change is to be made, that ye might just as weel let Bell and her bairns bide wi' you, for my grandmother's income is little enough for her ain wants, now that she's in a manner bedrid."



"It's easy for you, Meg, to speak," replied her mother, "but if ye had an experiment o' the heavy handfu' they hae been to me, ye wad hae mair compassion for your mother. It's surely a dispensation sair enough to hae the grief and heart-breaking sight before my eyes of a dementit lad that was so long a comfort to me in my widowhood. But it's the Lord's will, and I maun bend the knee o' resignation."

The reader will please remember that if poor Watty had been "weighed in the balances of the sheriff and found wanting," it was his mother who had helped to put him in them.

"Is't your intent," said the laird o' Dirdumwhamle, "to mak any division o' what lying money there may hae been saved since your father's death?"

"I suspect there will not be enough to defray the costs of the process," replied George; "and if any balance should remain, the house really stands so much in need of repair, that I am persuaded there will not be a farthing left."

"Deed," said the leddy, "what he says, Mr. Milrookit, is ouer true; the house is in a frail condition, for it was like pu'ing the teeth out o' Watty's head to get him to do what was needful. . . . But now that we are a' met here, I think it wad be just as weel an we were to settle at once what I'm to hae, as the judicious curator o' Watty—for, by course o' law and nature, the aliment will begin frae this day."

"Yes," replied George . . . "what is your opinion, Mr. Milrookit, as to the amount that she should have?"

"All things considered," replied the laird of Dirdumwhamle, prospectively contemplating some chance of a reversionary interest to his wife in the leddy's

savings, "I think you ought not to make it less than a hundred pounds a year."

"A hundred pounds a year," exclaimed the leddy; "that'll no buy saut to his kail. I hope and expeck no less than the whole half o' the rents."

The lawyer suggested fifty.

"Fifty pounds!—fifty placks!" cried the indignant leddy. "I'll let baith you and the sheriff ken I'm no to be frauded o' my rights in that gait. I'll no faik a farthing o' a hundred and fifty."

"In that case, I fear," said Pitwinnoch, "Mr. George will be obliged to seek another custodier for the *fatuus*, as assuredly, mem, he'll ne'er be sanctioned to allow you anything like that."

"If ye think sae," interposed Mrs. Milrookit, compassionating the forlorn estate of her sister-in-law, "I daresay Mrs. Charles will be content to take him at a very moderate rate."

"Megsty me!" cried the leddy, "hae I been buying a pig in a pock like that? Is't a possibility that he can be ta'en out o' my hands, and no reasonable allowance made to me at a' ? . . . I'll never agree to ony such thing. I'll gang into Embro' mysel', and hae justice done me frae the Fifteen."

"But," said Mrs. Milrookit, "considering now the altered state of Watty's circumstances, I dinna discern how it is possible for my mother to uphold this house and the farm."

"I am quite of your opinion," said George; "and, indeed, it is my intention, after the requisite repairs are done to the house, to flit my family, for I am in hopes the change of air will be advantageous to my wife's health."

The leddy was thunderstruck, and unable to speak,

but her eyes were eloquent. Leddy Grippy started up, and gave a tremendous stamp with her foot. She then resumed her seat, and appeared all at once calm and smiling; but it was a calm betokening no tranquillity; in the course of a few seconds the hurricane burst forth, and alternately, with sobs and supplications, menaces and knocking of nieves, and drumming with her feet, the hapless Leddy Grippy divulged and expatiated in the plots and devices of George. But all was of no avail—her destiny was sealed; and with seventy-five pounds a year for aliment, she found herself under the painful necessity of taking a flat up a turnpike stair in Glasgow for herself and the *fatuus*.

There the leddy inveighed against George, who “had cheated her and deprived Watty of his lawful senses”; and there, some time after, he called to invite her over to the Kittlestonheugh, as he now called Grippy, and bring Watty, whither he had, in his new carriage, taken Mrs. Charles and her children, to spend a day—though only one of the new wings was finished.

“And enough too!” cried the leddy. “Geordie, tak’ my word for’t, it’ll a’ flee fast enough away wi’ ae wing.”

“Is my Betty Bodle to be there?” asked Watty.

“Oh yes,” replied George, glad to escape from his mother’s remarks, “and you’ll be quite delighted to see her. She is uncommonly tall for her age.”

“I dinna like that,” said Walter. “She shouldna hae grown ony bigger—for I dinna like big folk.”

“And why not?”

“Cause ye ken, Geordie, the law’s made only for them; and, if you and me had aye been twa wee brotherly laddies, playing on the gowany brae, as we used to do, ye would ne’er hae thought o’ bringing

yon cluty's claw frae Enbro' to prove me guilty of daftness."

The meeting again between the children and their poor uncle is told by Galt in what I cannot help thinking his rare fashion of comprehension, with a sadness most unstrained and most poignant. They were several years older now, but they remembered Watty's good nature, and looked forward to a long summer day with him of frolic and mirth. On alighting from the carriage they bounded with light steps and jocund hearts in quest of their uncle; but when they found him sitting by himself in the garden, they paused, and were disappointed. They recognised in him the same person whom they formerly knew, but they had heard he was daft, and they beheld him stooping forward, with his hands sillily hanging between his knees; and he appeared melancholy and helpless.

"Uncle Watty," said James compassionately, "what for are ye sitting here alone?"

Watty looked up, and gazing at him vacantly for a few seconds, said, "'Cause naebody will sit wi' me, for I am a daft man." He then drooped his head, and sank into the same listless posture in which they had found him.

"Do ye no ken me?" said Mary.

He again raised his eyes, and alternately looked at them both, eagerly and suspiciously. Mary appeared to have outgrown his recollection, for he turned from her; but, after some time he began to discover James; and a smile of curious wonder gradually illuminated his countenance, and developed itself into a broad grin of delight, as he said:

"What a heap o' meat, Jamie Walkinshaw, ye maun

hae eaten to mak' you sic a muckle laddie;" and he drew the boy towards him as he had formerly done; but the child, escaping from his hands, retired several paces backward, and eyed him with pity mingled with disgust. Watty, again folding his hands, dropped them between his knees, and hung his head, saying to himself: "But I'm daft; naebody cares for me noo; I'm a cumberer o' the ground, and a' my Betty Bodles are ta'en away."

The accent in which this was expressed touched the natural tenderness of the little girl, and she went up to him and said:

"Uncle, I'm your wee Betty Bodle; what for will ye no speak to me?"

His attention was again roused, and he took her by the hand, and, gently stroking his head, said, "Ye're a bonny flower, and lily-like leddy, and leal in the heart, and kindly in the e'e! but ye're no my Betty Bodle."

Suddenly, however, something in the cast of her countenance reminded him so strongly of her more childish appearance, that he caught her in his arms, and attempted to dandle her; but the action was so violent that it frightened the child, and she screamed, and struggling out of his hands, ran away. James followed her; and their attention being soon drawn to other objects, poor Watty was left neglected by all during the remainder of the afternoon.

At dinner he was brought in and placed at the table, with one of the children on each side; but he paid them no attention.

"What's come o'er thee, Watty?" said his mother. "I thought ye would hae been out o' the body wi' your Betty Bodle; but ye ne'er let on ye see her."

"'Cause she's like a' the rest," said he sorrowfully.

"She canna abide me; for ye ken I'm daft. It's surely an awfu' leprosy this daftness, that it gars everybody flee me; but I canna help it. It's no my faut, but the Maker's that made me, and the laws that found me guilty. But, Geordie, what's the use o' letting me live in this world, doing naething, and gude for naething. I'll no eat ony mair—it's evendoun wastrie for sic a useless, set-by thing as the like o' me to consume the fruits o' the earth. The cost o' my keep would be a braw thing to Bell, so I hope, Geordie, ye'll mak it ouer to her, for when I gae hame I'll lie down and die."

"Haud thy tongue, and no fright folk wi' sic blethers," exclaimed his mother, "but eat your dinner, and gang out to the green and play wi' the weans."

"An I werena' a daft creature, naebody would bid me play wi' weans—and the weans ken that I am sae, and mak a fool o' me for't. I dinna like to be everybody's fool. I'm sure the law when it found me guilty, might hae alloo't me a mair merciful punishment. Meg Wilcat, that stealt Provost Murdoch's cocket-hat, and was whippit for't at the Cross, was pitied wi' many a watery e'e; but everybody dauds and dings the daft laird o' Grippy."

They are the last words this great master of human nature and pathos puts into the mouth of Watty Walkinshaw. But they were not the last words spoken at Grippy that day, for the leddy's sharp eyes were soon open to George's desire, even then, when Jamie and Robina were both children, that his nephew and his daughter should be drawn together.

"I'm thinking," said she, "that the seeds of a matrimony are sown among us this day, for Geordie's a far-before looking soothsayer and a Chaldee excellence like his father; and a body doesna need an e'e in the

neck to discern that he's just evising and wiling for a purpose of marriage hereafter between Jamie and Beenie. Gude speed the wark! for really we hae had but little luck among us since the spirit o' disinheritance got the upper hand; and it would be a great comfort if a' sores could be salved and healed in the fulness of time, when the weans can be married according to law."

Geordie dutifully agreed, and the old leddy went on piously: "But marriages are made in heaven; and unless there has been a booking among the angels above, a' that can be done by man below, even to the crying, for the third and last time, in the kirk, will be only a thrashing the water and a raising of bells. However, the prayers of the righteous availeth much; and we should a' endeavour by our walk and conversation, to compass a work so meet for repentance until it's brought to a come-to-pass. So I hope, Bell Fatherlans, that ye'll be up and doing in this good work, watching and praying, like those who stand on the Tower of Siloam looking towards Lebanon."

Mrs. Charles, whom her mother-in-law called always by her maiden-name, smiling said: "I think that you are looking far forward. The children are still but mere weans, and many a day must pass over their green heads before such a project ought even to be thought of."

"It's weel kent, Bell," replied her mother-in-law, "that ye were ne'er a queen o' Sheba either for wisdom or forethought; but I hae heard my friend that's' awa'—your worthy father, Geordie—often say that as the twig is bent the tree's inclined, which is a fine sentiment, and should teach us to set about our undertakings with a knowledge of better things than of silver and gold, in order that we may be enabled to work the work o' Providence."

But just as the leddy was thus expatiating away in high solemnity, a dreadful cry arose among the pre-ordained lovers. The children had quarrelled—Robina slapped Jamie's face, and Jamie returned the slap with instantaneous energy.

As time went on Robina set her affections on her other cousin Walkie Milrookit, and Jamie set his on a certain Ellen Frazer, whose charms and excellence will not concern us here. Robina was sly, and though she was determined not to marry James, she did not so much want to refuse him, as to seem to her father to be refused by him. To her grandmother she complained of her father's tyranny in so openly urging a union that would make her miserable, especially, as she said, when Jamie's devotion to Ellen Frazer was so obvious. But Leddy Grippy neither felt nor showed sympathy.

"Never fash your head, Beenie, my dear," said she, "about Jamie's calf-love for yon daffodil; but be an obedient child, and walk in the paths of pleasantness that ye're ordain't to, both by me and your father; for we hae had ouer lang a divided family; and it's full time we were brought to a cordial understanding with one another."

"But," replied the disconsolate damsel, "even though he had no previous attachment, I'll ne'er consent to marry him, for really I can never fancy him."

"And what for can ye no fancy him?" cried the leddy; "I would like to ken that? But, to be plain wi' you, Beenie, it's a shame to hear a weel educated Miss like you, brought up wi' a Christian principle, speaking about fancying young men. Sic a thing was ne'er alloo't nor heard tell o' in my day and generation. But that comes o' your ganging to see Douglas tragedy at that

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kirk o' Satan in Dunlop Street; where, as I am most creditably informed, the play-actors court ane another before all the folk."

"I am sure you have yourself experienced," replied Robina, "what it is to entertain a true affection, and to know that our wishes and inclinations are not under our own control. How would you have liked had your father forced you to marry against your will?"

"Lassie, lassie!" exclaimed the leddy, "if ye live to be a grandmother like me, ye'll ken the right sense o' a lawful and tender affection. But there's no sincerity noo like the auld sincerity: when me and your honest grandfather, that was in mine, and is now in Abraham's bosom, came thegither, we had no foistring and parleyvooring, like your nouvelle turtle-doves, but discoursed in a sober and wise-like manner anent the cost and charge o' a family."

"Ah! but your affection was mutual from the beginning—you were not perhaps devoted to another?"

"Gude guide us, Beenie Walkinshaw! are ye devoted to another? Damon and Phillis, pastorauling at hide and seek wi' their sheep, was the height o' discretion compared wi' sic curdooing. My lass, I'll no let the grass grow beneath my feet till I hae gi'en your father notice o' this loup-the-window, and hey cockalorum-like love. . . . Wha is it wi'? But I needna speer; for I'll be nane surprised to hear that it's a play-actor, or a soldier-officer, or some other clandestine poetical."

Miss affected to laugh, saying:

"What has made you suppose that I have formed any improper attachment? I was only anxious that you should speak to my father, and try to persuade him that I can never be happy with my cousin."

"How can I persuade him o' ony sic havers? Na,

na, Beenie, ye're an instrument in the hands o' Providence to bring about a great blessing to your family; and I would be as daft as your uncle Watty, when he gaed out to shoot the flees—so you maun just mak up your mind to conform. My word, but ye're weel aff to be married in your teens—I was past thirty before man speert my price."

Robina urged that James would not, she was sure, consent if she would.

"Weel," cried the leddy, "I declare if ever I heard the like of sic upsetting. I won'er what business either you or him hae to consenting or non-consenting. Is't no the pleasure o' your parentage that ye're to be married, and will ye dare to commit the sin of disobedient children? Beenie Walkinshaw, had I said sic a word to my father, who was a man o' past-ordinar sense, weel do I ken what I would hae gotten. I only just once, in a' my life, in a mistak' gied him a contradiction, and he declared that, had I been a son as I was but a dochter, he would hae grippit me by the cuff o' the neck and the back o' the breeks, and shuttled me through the window. But the end o' the world is drawing near, and corruption's working daily to a head; a' modesty and maidenhood has departed frae womankind, and the sons o' men are workers of iniquity—priests o' Baal, and transgressors every one. A', therefore, my leddy, that I hae to say to you is a word o' wisdom, and they ca't conform—Beenie, conform—and obey the fifth commandment."

The leddy sent for Jamie, and the interview was as queer as that just described; but she liked the handsome, frank lad better than the sly Miss, and though she rated him she did not frighten him. Then she sent for her son, and tried to find out exactly what he

had in his mind. She told him plainly she saw no mutual liking between the cousins, but suspected much between James and Ellen Frazer. George anxiously inquired if she had any real grounds for this suspicion.

"Frae a' that I can hear, learn, and understand," replied the leddy, "though it mayna be probable-like, yet I fear it's ower true; for when he gangs to see his mother [who lived in the same village with Miss Frazer]—and it's aye wi' him as wi' the saints—'O Mother, dear Jerusalem, when shall I come to thee?'—I am most creditably informed that the twa do nothing but sally forth hand in hand to walk in the green valleys, singing, 'Low down in the broom' and 'Pu'ing lilies both fresh and gay'—which is as sure a symptom o' something very like love, as the hen's cackle is o' a new-laid egg."

"Nevertheless," said the laird, "I should have no great apprehensions, especially when he comes to understand how much it is his interest to prefer Robina."

"That's a' true, Geordie; but I hae a misdoot that a's no right and sound wi' her mair than wi' him; and when we reflect how the mim maidens nowadays hae delivered themselves up to the little-gude in the shape and glamour o' nouvelles and Thomson's Seasons, we need be nane surprised to fin' Miss as headstrong in her obduracy as the lovely young Lavinia, that your sister Meg learned to 'cite at the boarding school."

George saw his daughter, and James saw her too; and of this last interview something came, for the young gentleman understood pretty well that, to please her at all events, he need urge no suit upon her. Then he saw his uncle, and made him know he would not be

his son-in-law. On getting into Glasgow he called on his grandmother. On entering the parlour he found the old lady alone, seated in her elbow-chair by the fire. A single slender candle stood at her elbow on a claw-foot table, and she was winding the yarn from a pirn with a hand-reel, carefully counting the turns. Hearing the door open, she looked round, and, seeing who it was, said :

"Is that thee, Jamie Walkinshaw?—Six-and-thirty—where cam ye frae—seven-and-thirty—at this time o' night?—eight-and-thirty—sit ye down—nine-and-thirty—snuff the candle—forty."

He told her he had been with his uncle and that they had fallen out.

"No possible!—nine-and-forty—what hast been about?—fifty—but hae ye been condumacious?—Seven-and—plague tak' the laddie, I'm out in my count, and I'll hae to begin the cut again; so I may set by the reel."

He told her his uncle had required him to break with Ellen and offer himself to Robina.

"And sure I am, Jamie," replied the leddy, "that it will be lang before you can do better."

James went on to say that his mind was now made up; he would work no longer in his uncle's counting-house, but in the morning would go out to his mother's at Camrachle and would leave Glasgow altogether.

"Got ye ony drink, Jamie," asked the leddy, "in the gait hame, that ye're in such a wud humour for dancing 'Auld Sir Simon the King' on the road to Camrachle? Man, an I had as brisk a bee in the bonnet, I would set aff at once, cracking my fingers at the moon and seven stars as I gaed louping alang

. . . awa' wi' you, awa' wi' you, and show how weel  
ye hae come to years o' discretion, by singing as ye  
gang,

'Scotsman, ho! Scotsman lo!

Where shall this poor Scotsman go?

Send him east, send him west,

Send him to the crow's nest.'"

All the same she ended by giving him supper and bed.

"I hope," said she, "nevertheless, that the spirit of obedience will soople that stiff neck o' thine in the slumber and watches o' the night, or I would ne'er be consenting to countenance such outstrapolous rebellion."

Stiff as the leddy had seemed in opposing Jamie and Robina in the one thing they had in common—a firm resolve not to marry each other—the moment was approaching when she was to exercise a most sudden change of front; for we next behold her hurrying Beenie into an immediate marriage with someone else. The leddy had all along suspected "Miss" of hankering after some play-actor or soldier-officer, and, believing her to be George's lawful and sole heiress, she thoroughly approved of his determination to keep all he had to leave in the family; but she had no superstitious veneration for the name of Walkinshaw, and, since one grandson was determined not to be laird of Kittlestonehugh at the price of marrying the laird's daughter, she had no objection to helping another grandson to lands and lady both—as soon as her eyes were opened to the fact that it was Walkinshaw Milrookit on whom Robina had set her affections.

"Eh! megsty me! I'm sparrow-blasted," exclaimed the leddy, throwing herself back in her chair, and lift-

ing both her hands in wonderment. "But thou, Beenie, is a soople fairy; and so a' the time that thy father—as blin' as the silly blind bodie that his wife gart believe her gallant's horse was a milch cow sent frae her minny—was wising and wyling to bring about a matrimony, or, as I should ca't, a matter-o'-money conjugality wi' your cousin Jamie, hae ye been linking by the dyke-sides, out o' sight, wi' Walky Milrookit? Weel, that beats print! Whatna novelle gied you that lesson, lassie? Hech, sirs! auld as I am, but I wad like to read it. Howsever, Beenie, as the ae oe is as sib to me as the ither, I'll be as gude as my word . . . and let your father play the Scotch measure, or shan-truse, wi' the bellows and the shank o' the besom, to some warlock wallop o' his auld papistical and pater-nostering ancestors that hae been—gude preserve us!—for ought I ken to the contrary, suppin' brimstone broth wi' the deil lang afore the time o' Adam and Eve."

When presently her daughter and Dirdumwhamle arrived, the leddy opened on them at once her project of an instant wedding: the laird jumped to the notion, his wife was for more caution.

"Meg," said the leddy, "ye speak as one of the foolish women; ye ken nothing about it. . . . Na, na, Dirdumwhamle, heed her not: she lacketh understanding—it's you an' me, laird, that maun work the wherry in this breeze—ye're a man o' experience in the ways o' matrimony, having been, as we all know, thrice married—and I am an aged woman, that hasna travelled the world for sax-and-seventy years without hearing the toast o' 'Love and Opportunity' . . . and there can be no sin in it, Meg, for is't no commanded in Scripture to increase and multiply?"

Dirdumwhamle was very willing to be persuaded, but Meg still proposed objections.

"My word, Meg," cried the leddy, "but t'ou has a stock o' impudence, to haud up thy snout in that gait to the she that bore thee! Am I ane of these that hae, by reason of more strength, a'maist attaint to the age of fourscore, without learning the right frae the wrang o' moral conduct, as that delightful man, Dr. Pringle o' Garnoch, said in his sermon on the Fast Day, that t'ou has the spirit o' sedition . . . when I'm labouring in the vineyard o' thy family? Dirdumwhamle, your wife there, she's my dochter, and sorry am I to say it; but, it's well known, and I dinna misdoot ye hae found it to your cost, that she is a most unreasonable, narrow, contracted woman, and, wi' a' her through-gality—her direction-books to mak grozart wine for deil-be-licket, and her Katy Fisher's cookery, whereby she would gar us trow she can mak fat kail o' chucky-stanes and an auld horse-shoe—we a' ken, and ye ken, laird, warst o' a', that she flings away the pease, and maks her hotch-potch wi' the shauwps, or, as the auld by-word says, tynes botles gathering straes. So what need the like o' you and me sit in council, and the Shanedrimms o' the people, wi' ane o' the stupidest bawkie-birds that e'er the Maker o't took the trouble to put the breath o' life in? Fey, did ye say? that's a word o' discretion to fling at the head o' your aged parent! Howsever, it's no worth my condescendence to lose my temper wi' the like o' her. But, Meg Walkinshaw, or Mrs. Milrookit, though ye be there afore your gudeman, the next time ye diminish my understanding I'll may be let ye ken what it is to blaspheme your mother; so tak' heed lest ye fall."

After this Meg durst urge no more objections against

a match she desired, and there and then the minister was called and the marriage carried out—before the bride's father came back from Camrachle. When he came he confessed the ill-success of his mission. Jamie was obdurate; he would go into the army, and he would not marry Robina.

"Since he will to Cupar, let him gang," said the leddy, "and just compose your mind to approve o' Beenie's marriage wi' Walky, who is a lad of a methodical nature, and no a hurly-burly ramstam, like yon flea-luggit thing, Jamie."

George declared that he would almost as soon carry his daughter's head to the churchyard as see that match.

"Weel, weel," said the leddy, winking at those in the secret, "frae something I hae heard the lad himsel' say this vera day, it's no a marriage that ever noo is likely to happen in this world . . . but it's o' the nature o' a possibility that she will draw up wi' some young lad o' very creditable connexions and conduct, but wha', for some thraw o' your ain, ye wouldna let her marry. What would ye do then, Geordie? Ye would hae to settle or ye would be a most horridable parent."

"My father for so doing disinherited Charles," said George gravely.

"That's vera true, Geordie—a bitter business it was to us a', and was the because o' your worthy father's sore latter end. But ye ken the property's entail't; and, when it pleases the Maker to take you to Himself, by consequence Beenie will get the estate."

"That's not so certain," replied George jocularly. "My wife has of late been more infirm than usual, and were I to marry again, and had male heirs——"

"Hoot, wi' your male heirs and your snuffies; I hate



the vera name o' sic things—they hae been the pests o' my life. It would hae been a better world without them—but we needna cast out about sic unborn babes o' Chevy Chase, so a' I hae to say for the present is that I expect ye'll tak' your dinner wi' us."

They went to dinner—bride and bridegroom frightened, bridegroom's parents hardly less so, and bride's father absent-minded and worried—the leddy alone indomitable.

Presently she proposed a toast—that of the newly-wedded pair, but by circumstance and craftily.

"It's extraordinary to me, Beenie," said she, "to lo and behold you sitting as mim as a May puddock, when you see us a' met here for a blithesome occasion—and, Walky, what's come ower thee, that thou's no a bit mair brisk than the statue o' marble-stane that I ance saw in that sink o' deceitfulness, the Parliament House o' Edinburgh? As for our Meg thy mother, she was aye one of your Moll-on-the-coals, a sigher o' sadness, and I'm none surprised to see her in the hypochondricals; but for Dirdumwhamle, your respeckit father, a man o' prospects, family, and connexions—the three cardinal points o' genteelity—to be as one in doleful dumps, is sic a doolie doomster, that Uncle Geordie there, where he sits, like a sow playing on a trump, is a perfect beautiful Absalom in a sense o' comparison. However, I'll gie ye a toast. . . . Geordie, my son and bairn, ye ken as weel as I ken, what a happy matrimonial your sister had wi' Dirdumwhamle, and, Dirdumwhamle, I needna say to you, ye hae found her a winsome helpmate. Noo, what I would propose for a propine, Geordie, is—Health and Happiness to Mr. and Mrs. Milrookit, and may they long enjoy many happy returns o' this day."

The toast was drunk with great glee, amid the nods and winks of the leddy, and the immoderate laughter of her son at her eccentricity.

"Noo, Geordie my man," she went on, "seeing ye're in sic a state o' mirth and jocundity, and knowing, as we a' know, that life is but a weaver's shuttle, and Time a wabster, that works for Death, Eternity and Co., great wholesale merchants; but for a' that, I am creditably informed they'll be obligated, some day, to mak a sequester. Howsever, that's nane o' our concerns just now; but, Geordie, as I was saying, I would fain tell you o' an exploit . . . do you know that ever since Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, the life o' man has been growing shorter and shorter? To me, noo sax and seventy years auld, the monthly moon's but as a glaik on the wall, the spring but as a butter-flee that tak's the wings o' the morning, and a' the summer only as the tinkling o' a cymbal—as for hairst and winter, they are the shadows o' death; the whilk is an admonishment that I shouldna be overly gair anent the world, but mak mysel' and others happy, by taking the sanctified use o' what I hae—so, Geordie and sirs, ye'll fill another glass. Noo, Geordie, as life is but a vapour, a puff out o' the stroop o' the tea-kettle o' Time, let's a' consent to mak' one another happy; and there being no likelihood that ever Jamie Walkinshaw will colleague wi' Beenie, your dochter, I would fain hope ye'll gie her and Walky there baith your benison and aliment. Noo, Beenie, and noo, Walky, down on your knees baith o' you, and mak a novelle confession that ye were married the day; and beg your father's pardon that has been so jocose at your wedding-feast, that for shame he canna refuse to conciliate and mak a handsome aliment down on the nail."

But George would not pardon them, and the leddy herself had to find them bed and board till George's tragic death left Beenie mistress of herself and of the Kittlestonheugh, where the pair at once immediately entered into possession. This Beenie, to do her justice, did innocently; but Walky Milrookit had learned the truth from the rascally lawyer Pitwinnoch. Jamie, however, had gone soldiering and knew nothing of his rights; neither Milrookit nor Pitwinnoch intended to enlighten him.

When Jamie parted from the leddy, she was not like herself—the self he had always known. Instead of her wonted strain of jocular garrulity, she began to sigh deeply and weep bitterly.

"Thou's gaun awa' to face thy faes—as the sang sings 'Far, far frae me and Logan braes'—and I am an aged person, and may ne'er see thee again; and I'm wae to let thee gang, for, though thou was aye o' a nature that had nae right reverence for me, a deevil's buckie, my heart has aye warm't to thee mair than to a' the lave o' my grandchildren; it's well known to every one that kens me, that I hae a most generous heart—and I wadna part wi' thee without handselling thy knapsack. So tak the key and gang into the scrutoire, and bring out the pocket-book."

He was petrified, but did as he was desired; and having given her the pocket-book, sewed by his aunt Mrs. Milrookit when she was at the boarding-school, the leddy took out several of Robin Carrick's notes, and looking them over, presented him with one for fifty pounds.

"Noo, Jamie Walkinshaw," said she, "if ye spend ae plack o' that like a Prodigal Son, it's no to seek what I'll say when ye come back; but I doot, I doot, lang

before that day I'll be deep and dumb aneath the yird, and naither to see nor to hear o' thy weel or woe."

Jamie stood holding the bill, unable to speak. In the meantime she was putting up her other bills; and, in turning them over, seeing one for forty-nine pounds, she said, "Jamie, forty-nine pounds is a' the same as fifty to ane that pays his debts by the roll o' a drum. So tak this, and gie me that back."

When Jamie was gone the leddy was determined to do something for his mother and sister, but not out of her own pocket. Walky, now laird of Kittlestonheugh, brought Robina to pay duty to their grandmother, and the old woman at once told him that he ought to continue to Mrs. Charles the annuity even George had felt himself bound to allow her. For six weeks the leddy had given house-room and board to Walky and his wife, and she was not the woman to let them forget it now they were rich.

"Compliment," said she, "is like the chariot-wheels o' Pharaoh, sae dreigh o' drawing, that I canna afford to be blate wi' you ony langer. Howsever, Walky and Beenie, I hae a projection in my head, and it's o' the nature o' a solemn league and covenant: if ye'll consent to allow Bell Fatherlans her 'nuity of fifty pounds per annus, as it is called according to law, I'll score you out o' my books for the bed, board and washing due to me, and a heavy soom it is."

"Fifty pounds a-year!" exclaimed Milrookit. "Where do you think we are to get fifty pounds a year?"

"Just in the same neuk, Walky, where ye found the Kittlestonheugh estate, and the three-and-twenty thousand pounds o' lying siller, Beenie's braw tocher, and I think ye're a very crunkly character, though

your name's no Habakkuk, to gie me sic a constipation o' an answer."

Walky flatly refused to give the annuity to his aunt, and mumbled something about paying any lawful claim the leddy might have against him.

"Lawful claim? ye Goliath o' cheatin'!—if I hae ony lawful claim? But I'll say naething. I'll mak' out an account—and there's nae law in Christendom to stop me for charging what I like. Ye unicorn of oppression, to speak to me o' law, that was so kind to you; but law ye shall get, and law ye shall hae. Hech, Beenie, poor lassie! but thou hast ta'en thy sheep to a silly market. A skelp-the-dub creature to upbraid me wi' his justly dues! But crocodile, or croakin-deil, as I should ca' him, he'll get his ain justly dues; Mr. Milrookit o' Kittlestonheugh, as it's no the fashion when folk has recourse to the civil war o' a law-plea to stand on a ceremony, maybe ye'll find some mair pleasant place than this room, an ye were to tak the pains to gang to the outside o' my door."

On this gentle hint, as the leddy afterwards called it, Walky and Beenie took hasty departure, and their indignant grandmother forthwith sought Pitwinnoch "in the bottomless pit o' his consulting room."

"Ye'll be surprised to see me," said she, "for I hae been sic a lamiter with the rheumatees, that, for a' the last week, I was little better than a nymph o' anguish, . . . but ye maun know and understand, that I hae a notion to try my luck and fortune in the rowly-powly o' a law-plea . . . my twa ungrateful grandchildren, that I did sae muckle for at their marriage, hae used me waur than I were a Papistical Jew o' Jericho. I just, in my civil and discreet manner, was gie'n them a delicate memento-mori concerning their unsettled

'count for bed, board and washing, when up got Milrookit, as if he would hae flown out at the broadside o' the house, and threatened to tak me afore the lords for a Canaanitish woman, and an extortioner. But, first and foremost, before we come to the condescendence, I should state the case; and, Mr. Pitwinnoch, ye maun understand that I hae some knowledge o' what pertains to law, for my father was most extraordinar at it. Milrookit, as I was saying, having refused, point blank, Mr. Pitwinnoch, to implement the 'nuity o' fifty pounds per annus, that your client (that's a legal word, Mr. Pitwinnoch)—that your client settled on my gude-dochter, I told him he would—then and there refusing—be bound over to pay me for the bed, board and washing . . . he responded with a justly due—but I'll due him; and though, had he been calm and well-bred, I might have put up with ten pounds; yet, seeing what a ramping lion he made himsel', I'll no faik a farthing o' a thousand, which, at merchant's interest, will enable me to pay the 'nuity. So, when we get it, ye'll hae to find me somebody willing to borrow on an heritable bond."

Pitwinnoch reminded her that the entertainment had lasted but six weeks.

"Time, ye ken," replied the leddy, "as I hae often heard my father say, is no item in law; and unless there's a statute of vagrancy in the Decisions, or the Raging Magistratom, there can be nae doot that I hae it in my power to put what value I please on my house, servitude and expense, which is the strong ground of the case."

When the leddy was gone Milrookit arrived, and, to his surprise, Pitwinnoch urged him to compound and give the old lady two hundred pounds. "Settle this

quietly," said the lawyer; "there's no saying what a lawsuit may lead to; considering the circumstances under which you hold the estate, don't stir, lest the sleeping dog awake."

With Walky's cheque Pitwinnoch sought the leddy. "Twa hundred pounds!" cried she—"but the fifth part o' my thousand! I'll ne'er tak' ony sic payment. Ye'll carry it back to Mr. Milrookit, and tell him I'll no faik a plack o' my just debt; and, what's mair, if he doesna pay me the whole tot down at once, he shall be put to the horn without a moment's delay."

"You must be quite aware," urged the lawyer, "that he owes you no such sum as this. You said yourself that ten pounds would have satisfied you."

"And so it would—but that was before I gaed to law wi' him; but seeing now I hae the rights o' my plea, I'll hae my thousand pounds if the hide be on his snout. Whatna better proof could ye hae o' the justice o' my demand, than that he should hae come down in terror at once wi' twa hundred pounds? I hae known my father law for seven years, and even when he won, he had money to pay out of his own pocket."

The leddy got her thousand pounds and invested it for Mrs. Charles: to the young lawyer who came for her signature to the deed of mortgage she boasted of her victory.

"For ye maun ken, Willy Keckle," said she, "that I hae overcome principalities and powers in this controversy. Wha ever heard o' thousands o' pounds gotten for sax weeks' bed, board and washing like mine? But it was a righteous judgment on the Nabal, Milrookit—whom I'll never speak to again in this world, and no in the next either, I doot, unless he mends his manners."

Willy Keckle thought it as wonderful as she did, and told his master, an honest lawyer, called Whitteret, who happened to be on the point of starting for Edinburgh. There, at a legal symposium, he repeated the queer story of Leddy Grippy's law plea. The result was an examination at the Register Office of old Claud Walkinshaw's original deed of entail, so reluctantly drawn by good Keelevin, long ago, himself long dead. Whitteret was one of the examiners, and he at once began to act for Jamie; but another was a certain Pilledge, who resolved to make what he could by offering his services to Milrookit. His first call at Glasgow was on the leddy.

"You are the lady," said he, "I presume, of the late much respected Claud Walkinshaw, commonly styled of Grippy."

"So they say, for want o' a better," replied the leddy, stopping her wheel and looking upon him, "but wha are ye? and what's your will?"

"My name is Pilledge. I am a writer to the signet, and I have come to see Mr. Milrookit of Kittlestonheugh respecting an important piece of business. . . ." The leddy pricked up her ears, for, exulting in her own knowledge of the law, by which she had so recently triumphed, as she thought, she became eager to know what the important piece of business could be—and she replied:

"Nae doot it's anent the law-plea he has been brought into an account of his property."

Milrookit had been engaged in no suit whatever, but this was the way she took to trot the Edinburgh writer, and she added:

"How do ye think I'll gang wi' him? Is there ony prospect o' the Lord Ordinary coming to a decision on the pursuer's petition?"

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This really looked so like the language of the Parliament House, considering it came from an old lady, that Pilledge was taken in, and, his thoughts running on the entail, he immediately fancied that she alluded to something connected with it, and said :

"I should think, Madam, that your evidence would be of the utmost importance to the case, and it was to advise with him chiefly as to the line of defence he ought to take that I came from Edinburgh."

"Nae doot, sir, I could gie an evidence, and instruct on the merits of the interdict," said she, learnedly ; "but I ne'er hae yet been able to come to a right understanding anent and concerning the different aforesaid set forth in the respondent's reclaiming petition. Noo, I would be greatly obligated if ye would expone to me the nice point, that I may be able to decern accordingly."

The writer to the signet had never heard a clearer argument, either at the bar or on the bench, and he replied :

"Indeed, mem, it lies in a very small compass. It appears that the heir-male of your eldest son is the rightful heir of entail ; but there are so many difficulties in the terms of the settlement, that I should not be surprised were the court to set the deed aside, in which case Mrs. Milrookit would still retain the estate as heir-at-law of her father."

We must allow the reader to conceive with what feelings the leddy heard this . . . but she still preserved her juridical gravity and said :

"It's very true what you say, sir, that the heir-male of my eldest son—is a son—I can easily understand that point o' law ; but can you tell me how the heir-at-law of her father, Mrs. Milrookit that is, came to be a

dochter, when it was aye the intent and purpose o' my friend that's awa', the testator, to make no provision but for heirs-male, which his heart, poor man, was very set on? Howsever, I suppose that's to be considered in the precognition."

"Certainly, mem," replied the writer; "nothing is more clear than that your husband intended the estate to go, in the first instance, to the heirs-male of his sons; first to those of Walter, the second son; and failing them, to those of George, the third son; and, failing them, then to go back to the heirs-male of Charles, the eldest son; and failing them to the heirs-general of your daughter Margaret."

"I understand that weel," said the leddy, "it's as plain as a pike-staff that my oe Jamie, the soldier-officer, is by right the heir."

"But the case has other points, and especially as the heir of entail is in the army, I certainly would not advise Mr. Milrookit to surrender."

"But he'll maybe be counselled better," rejoined the leddy; "and if ye'll tak' my advice, ye'll no scaud your lips in other folk's kail. Mr. Pitwinnoch is as gude a Belzebub's baby for a law-plea as ony writer to the signet in that bottomless pit, the House o' Parliament in Edinburgh; and since ye hae told me what ye hae done, it's but right to let ye ken what I'll do. As yet I hae had but ae lawsuit . . . but it winna be lang till I hae another; for if Milrookit doesna consent, the morn's morning, to gie up the Kittlestonheugh, he'll fin' again what it is to plea wi' a woman o' my experience."

To Pitwinnoch the lady hied hot-foot, and opened her case. He began to fence, expressing surprise and inability to understand her meaning: but she took him up.

"Your surprise, and having no understanding, Mr. Pitwinnoch, is a symptom to me that ye're no qualified to conduct my case!" and she held Whitteret over his head: after nearly blinding him with heirs-male, heirs-female, and heirs-general, she ended by declaring that Milrookit should renounce the property "the morn's morning, if there's a town-officer in Glasgow."

"But, Madam, you have no possible right to it!" exclaimed the lawyer, puzzled.

"Me! Am I 'a heir-male'?" cried the leddy, "an aged woman and a grandmother! Surely, Mr. Pitwinnoch, your education maun hae been greatly negleckit, to ken so little o' the laws o' nature and nations. No; the heir-male's a young man, the eldest son's only son. . . . Ye'll just, Mr. Pitwinnoch, write a mandamus to Milrookit, in a civil manner—mind that; and tell him in the same that I'll be greatly obligated if he'll gie up the house and property of Kittlestonheugh to the heir-male, James Walkinshaw, his cousin; or, failing therein, ye'll say that I hae implemented you to pronounce an interlocutor against him; and ye may gie him a bit hint frae yoursel'—in a noty beny at the bottom—that you advise him to conform, because you are creditably informed that I mean to pursue him wi' a' the law o' my displeasure."

Pitwinnoch hurried out to Kittlestonheugh and there found Pilledge closeted with Milrookit: an angry scene of mutual recriminations had come to blows between the false laird and the false lawyer when in sailed the leddy—who had saved coach-hire by the happy chance of meeting Beenie, to whom she had divulged nothing, but had said, "If ye'll gie me a hurl in the carriage, I'll no object to gang wi' you and speer for your gude-man, for whom I hae a manner o' respeck, even though

he was a thought unreasonable anent my charge o' moderation for the bed and board."

"Shake him weel, Mr. Pitwinnoch," cried the leddy, looking in, "and if he'll no conform! I'll redde ye gar him conform."

"Mr. Milrookit," said Pitwinnoch, "though we have had a few words, is quite sensible that he has not a shadow of reason to withhold the estate from the heir of entail. He will give it up the moment it is demanded."

"Then I demand it this moment!" exclaimed the leddy, "and out of this house, that was my ain, I'll no depart till Jamie Walkinshaw, the righteous heir-male, comes to tak' possession. . . . Beenie," said the leddy, with the most ineffable self-satisfied equanimity, "I hope ye'll prepare yoursel' to hear wi' composity the sore affliction that I'm ordain't to gie you. Eh, Beenie! honesty's a braw thing; and I'll no say that your gudeman, my ain oe, hasna been a deevil that should get his dues—what they are, the law and lawyers as weel as me ken are little short o' the halter. But, for a' that, our ain kith and kin, Beenie—we maun jook and let the jawp gae by. So I counsel you to pack up your ends and your awls, wi' a' the speed ye dow; for there's no saying what a rampageous soldier-officer, whose trade it is to shoot folks, may say or do. You and Milrookit must take up your bed and walk to some other dwelling-place; for here, at Kittlestonheugh, ye hae no continued city, Beenie, my dear, and I'm very sorry for you. It's wi' a very heavy heart, and an e'e o' pity, that I'm obligated not to be beautiful on the mountains."

Alas! we must tear ourselves from this inimitable woman; though much remains to be told of her before

the last scene, in which she bids Mrs. Charles fetch her the old pocket-book, and speaks as follows :

"Bring me a pen that can spell, and I'll indoss this bit hundred pounds to thee, Bell, as an over and aboon; and when ye hae gotten it, gang and bid Jamie and Mary come to see me, and I'll gie him the auld gold watch, and her the silver teapot, just as a reward to the sympathising, simpering, and wheedling Milrookits. For, between oursels', Bell, my time is no to be lang noo among you. I feel the clay-cold fingers o' Death handling my feet; so when I hae settled my concernments, ye'll send for Dr. Deilfear, for I wouldna like to mount into the chariots o' glory without the help o' an orthodox."

And if any reader can tell me where to find the leddy's equal in all the range of fiction, I can only say, as *she* would say, that "I'll make a noty beny of it." Till then I am content to agree with Lord Byron that for truth, nature, and individuality the Ledy o' Grippy is surpassed by no female character since the days of Shakespeare.

## FICKLE FAME

"WHERE do good reputations go when they die?" was a question once asked by the present writer. From the public he received no more answer than a preacher expects who varies the monotony of blank assertion by a brief fusillade of blank interrogation.

Where *do* good reputations go when they die? Into biographical dictionaries. Turn out an old one, itself departed this life, and you will find them there—a hundred famous people of whom you never heard, a thousand of whom you have no more than heard.

No doubt the best reputations do not die, and these exist without much reference to their monuments, which may be little frequented. There comes a point when the fame, for instance, of a great writer ceases to depend on the number of his readers. Dr. Johnson's literary reputation is as huge as himself, and would be very inadequately measured by the extent to which anything he wrote is now read. He is *known* not now largely by his writings, but by his sayings, and millions of living human beings have a fair sense of intimacy with the great man who only read the *obiter dicta* of this burly pope preserved for us by Boswell.

Nevertheless, enormous as Johnson's debt, in the matter of living reputation, is to Boswell: it would be false to assert that without Boswell the doctor's reputation would be now obsolete. Few people to-day read

even *Rasselas* ; with Miss Jenkyns probably died the last critic who preferred that delightful book to *Pickwick*. Still fewer read *London* or the *Vanity of Human Wishes* : all the same, their author's reputation exists independent of his talk.

And there are greater names than Johnson's whose present fame is unaffected by the narrowed circle of their readers. Mr. Hall Caine and Miss Corelli may be more widely read than Shakespeare or Milton, but they are not more famous, even for the moment. Mr. Riley, while recommending a classical education for Tom Tulliver to his father, had a sense of himself understanding Latin generally, though his comprehension of any particular Latin was not ready : and English people have a similar sense of familiarity with Shakespeare and Milton which exists without any particular knowledge of their works. So Burke's oratorical supremacy is proudly felt by millions of his fellow-countrymen to-day who never read a line of any speech of his.

Absolute fame is of course not to be confounded with reputation or mere famousness. The former is achieved for ever, the latter may be enjoyed, like copyright in books, for life and a few years after, and may lapse much more quickly than copyright.

Fame is probably personal, due to the *man*, who only partially expressed himself in his outward achievement in whatever sphere it was ; so that the mere bulk of the latter was really accidental, and has not affected the substance of his greatness. It does not matter what kingdoms Alexander in fact conquered, nor would Napoleon be a greater man forever if he had won at Waterloo. Solomon's wisdom did not depend on the number of his proverbs, nor is the sanctity of a

saint invariably demonstrated by all the records of the hagiologist.

"I have read (says Emerson) that those who listened to Lord Chatham felt that there was something finer in the man than anything which he said. It has been complained of our brilliant English historian of the French Revolution that when he has told us all his facts about Mirabeau, they do not justify his estimate of his genius."

Carlyle, it may plausibly be argued, happened to over-estimate the genius of Mirabeau; and, indeed, the capacity of saying greater things than he did say may have been over-estimated by Chatham's hearers. But Emerson continues:

"The Gracchi, Agis, Cleomenes, and others of Plutarch's heroes, do not in the record of facts equal their own fame. Sir Philip Sidney, the Earl of Essex, Sir Walter Raleigh, are men of great figure and of few deeds. We cannot find the smallest part of the personal weight of Washington in the narrative of his exploits."

The greatness of these great men was, in fact, in themselves, and their outward achievements were no more than hints of what they were. A man cannot be lower than his highest thought, but his biggest act may be much smaller than himself.

"The authority of Schiller," added Emerson, "is too great for his books," and, perhaps, when the essayist wrote, it was still too great for Schiller himself. If he did not carry all the weight of it to heaven, it is lighter at present on earth than the poet of Wilhelm Tell and the Piccolomini would probably approve.

"This inequality of the reputation to the works and



the anecdotes," Emerson declares, with an insight and judgment none the less fine because his own reputation is attenuated, and his authority a good deal decreased, "is not accounted for by saying that the reverberation is longer than the thunder-clap: but somewhat resided in these men which begot an expectation that outran all their performance. The largest part of their power was latent."

Their greatness was in fact in themselves: words, deeds, and books were only specimens, haphazard, as called forth by time and occasion.

The more inward a man's greatness, in proportion to the external show of it, the more substantial, and therefore lasting, his fame; the more he exhausts his actual stock of himself in visible production, the more his immediate notoriety will be perceived; but, as most of his acts and words are put out to meet a temporary occasion, so, when the occasion has gone by, his reputation is liable to fall obsolete. In the matter of fame also you cannot have your cake and eat it too.

But it seems to me that in the neighbourhood of this subject of fame and reputation one or two interesting questions present themselves for consideration. Some once very healthy reputations have certainly expired and are now no longer even mourned: the late Mr. Tupper not only made a good deal of money out of his *Proverbial Philosophy*, but secured a wide reputation, of the third or fourth class, which has long gone to its account.

Other reputations, however, have not only died, or died down, but have risen again or sprouted afresh. For quite a generation this was, I believe, the case with Jane Austen, though it may be scarcely credited now. For the last twenty years her delicate and peculiar

genius has been more and more widely and explicitly appreciated; for the thirty years before, it was almost forgotten, and very frankly ignored. No doubt she always had readers, and they were all sincere if silent admirers. But I suspect they were largely of one class, and were in the main elderly people. In country-houses, where good books are more read and better tasted than the London public and some literary circles are apt to realise, she was read by the serious; not much elsewhere except by the genuine book-lovers who go on reading everything, which really is a book, for ever. Nowadays, not only are her books sold in great numbers, but they are read by all sorts of people. There are some books of which scores of copies are bought for one which is read, and others which have dozens of readers for every copy sold. At present Jane Austen's works belong to the latter class; people not only buy them, but they borrow them to read.

The same fate, as I believe, was Blake's. He was once very nearly famous, if not quite: he is now very famous indeed: but there was a long interval during which he was neither much read nor much remembered. Perhaps he is just now more praised than read; not to praise him is, at present, not to care for poetry: yet it may be imagined that some who do not care for much of him may be able to like other fine poetry all the same. Once you know it is your duty there is no difficulty in admiring *Little lamb, who made you?* and *Tiger, tiger, burning bright*, and plenty besides: but there may be readers, who would just as lief *The Prophetic Books* had never been written, who would feel a very deep sense of personal loss if anything happened to Shakespeare's Songs, or Keats' *Grecian Urn* either.

The re-animation of deceased reputations may be largely due to literary critics, especially of that now numerous class whose own reputation is almost entirely due to their gropings among the bones of their betters. It is a thriving trade, and the writing of introductions must be a lucrative branch of it. No doubt it is useful—if one has to be introduced to a great man an introduction seems appropriate enough. It is only when the acquaintance is already of some standing and intimacy that the introduction is felt to be officious.

We have heard Emerson pointing out that some great reputations in literature, and elsewhere, were larger than the productions or deeds of their owners. Anthony Trollope appears to me an instance of the contrary phenomenon. His literary reputation seems much inferior to his literary achievement. The literary critics of the sort just alluded to are, indeed, already making at him: he has been "introduced" by more than one or two such: articles are written about him and his work, and have been, for ten years or a dozen: but they are mostly apologies, and the boldest are craven enough to damn with faint praise. To hear some of these gentry deal out their timid eulogies of such masterpieces as *Barchester Towers* and *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, makes one sympathise more than ever with Willoughby in *Sense and Sensibility* when he said, "Who would submit to the indignity of being approved by such women as Lady Middleton and Mrs. Jennings, that could command the indifference of anybody else?"

Unless a masterpiece can be successfully compared with some other, this kind of critic is commonly unable to realise that it is a masterpiece at all. They wait to acclaim it till some bolder spirit has made the discovery.

It took a long time for *Wuthering Heights* to obtain common recognition as an achievement of the first class: it was a Brontë-book, and had to be ranged alongside the other Brontë-books: *Jane Eyre* was unassailable, and it was not really particularly like *Jane Eyre*: it must be inferior. As a matter of fact it belongs to no class, but stands alone and cannot be weighed by comparison with any other book. Dr. Johnson said *Tristram Shandy* would perish because it was odd; and it certainly was odd though it has not perished. *Wuthering Heights* is much more than odd, and no doubt its singularity stood, and will always stand, between it and mere popularity. There is, however, something higher than popularity, and that recognition of eminence has slowly been accorded to this astounding work of an isolated, melancholy genius. Even now too much stress is laid on the accident of authorship—as if the most remarkable fact in relation to *Wuthering Heights* is that it was written by a girl: whereas the book itself is the most remarkable thing about it: and the truth is, it would be astounding no matter by whom it had been written.

Emily Brontë is not cited as an instance of a reputation which died and was brought to life again: her fame is only coming to posthumous birth long after her own death of the flesh. If there be literary justice in posterity, the same recognition awaits *The Entail*, whose author so far has never attained any but a secondary place, and that for his much inferior *Annals of the Parish* and *The Ayrshire Legatees*.

Miss Burney and Miss Edgeworth are, however, both instances. The authoress of *Evelina* could support, with resignation, a tolerable weight of fame in her lifetime, and she had to do it. She had her Dr. Johnson,

just as the authoress of *Robert Elsmere* had her Mr. Gladstone: but perhaps the public was more indebted to the latter sponsor than the former. Without any *imprimatur* Miss Burney's irresistible gallery of pictures must have been soon crowded with delighted spectators.

All the same *Evelina* went out of vogue, and there came a day when, by the general public, it was neglected as old-fashioned. That day is past: and the pertest critic would not now dare to write himself Dogberry by any depreciation of the great Fanny.

So of the much less great, but much more lovable, Maria. She had her Sir Walter, just as the older writer had her Johnson: and "the Wizard" was notoriously more lavish of praise than the doctor. No doubt she owed him much in her day: but no one would now read anyone because the author of *Waverley* said they had better: authority in criticism is less esteemed just at present than loquacity. And Miss Edgeworth is read again: not as Miss Austen is read, for Miss Austen wrote of England, and the English reader never cared much about Ireland: but still a good deal. *The Absentee* and *Castle Rackrent* need not be sought for in second-hand book-shops: they are to be seen on every railway book-stall, and publishers, like the conies, are a timid folk, and would certainly not provide the public with books because it ought to read them. Their concern is not at all with what should be read, but with what is freely bought.

Yet, in spite of her former and her present vogue, Maria Edgeworth also had her eclipse, during which she was as old-fashioned as an early Victorian wardrobe.

How about Sir Walter? Does every American who

dashes into Abbotsford when the family is at breakfast, as if nobody lived there, read *Guy Mannering*?

George Eliot, we are told, has already sunk into the tomb of Mrs. John Cross; which might serve her right if *Romola* and *Daniel Deronda* had not been preceded by *Silas Marner*, *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and *Scenes of Clerical Life*. As they were, we may be pretty easy as to her sure and certain resurrection. Why should her fame be stifled by Theophrastus Such? Did not Tennyson write the *May Queen* as well as *Ulysses*, *Tithonus*, and the *Lotus Eaters*?

Among poets, two, very different in quality, may be cited as instances of revived reputation—Herrick and Wordsworth. The occultation of the former lasted at all events for a century, though his reputation is now probably wider and greater than it was originally. It was not possible that generations esteeming Pope the prince of poets should esteem Herrick as a poet at all.

Wordsworth in his lifetime took such care of his renown as a poet that his death was an inevitable blow to it. He left it, indeed, in trust to a body of admirers sincere and numerous, but even the trustees had not quite the conviction of the testator. And presently it was rather remembered how much of his work was inferior to his best than how immensely high his best ranks. The zenith of Tennyson's renown was the nadir of his predecessor's in the Laureateship. As for the public, it probably can only put up with one great poet at a time, and it had its living Laureate; there was no room for the dead one; nor, for a long time, for Browning or Swinburne either, though they had the advantage of not having yet joined the immortals.

The occultation of Wordsworth, however, lasted barely through a generation. During the last twenty

years of the late lamented century his reputation was steadily reviving and being preached up. If he was not always profound when he seemed silly it does not now matter; no one is anxious to throw *We are Seven* in his teeth; and for the sake of some of his sonnets scores of the others are reverently forgotten.

The highest fame must be impregnable, but even the highest is not subject to the complaint of monotony. Shakespeare himself was once in need of apologists, and Johnson was one of them. It might surprise the public of to-day to learn how poor was his estimation, how obsolete seemed his vogue, during a great part of the eighteenth century, and before Germany existed or the Holy Roman Empire had ceased. To praise him is now an impertinence which we are content to leave to a people without humour like the Germans, who think they invented him.

To speak of him as the one supreme human genius, would be to use a threadbare and stale phrase. We cannot realise that there was a long period during which he was not only unread, but unadmired; when he was supposed to belong to the crude, coarse, vulgar times, ere "taste" was discovered: when he was "unpolished," "clumsy"; careless or even ignorant of the "unities": when even those who went to see his plays acted could not be expected to bear the infliction of his actual words, but were treated to someone's "Version."

Fortune has always been called fickle because men have always been inconsequent. Fame is much more unreasonably fickle.

## KING'S SERVANTS

BEFORE God came down to earth to make His Church Catholic, the Truth, but half revealed and half known, was the family secret of one little Nation, lonely in the farthest corner of the Midland Sea: and she carried it, veiled in her heart and hidden from the great pagan world. In those far-off days the Gentile peoples, not knowing the One True and Living God, groped wistfully for gods, and made them of anything, lovely or potent, that they could perceive beside them on the earth, or above them in the heavens. For in them also was the great worship-hunger, still asserting itself against alien and unfriendly appetites; an indestructible witness to the fact, older than the world, that there is a God somewhere, and to the other fact, as old as man himself, that man must fain turn above himself, to something higher than himself, more potent than he and lovelier, that he may worship it.

Among those things that pagan man presently discerned as better than himself were the Arts, so that them also he deified, or half-deified. He made them daughters of Jove, with tender Memory for their Mother.

When the Church came, and the sum of truth revealed became the birthright of all Mankind who should choose to share her Divine inheritance, the Muses ceased to be false goddesses and were allotted a higher function because a true one. She bade



them leave a throne that was not theirs, and yield it to Him whose alone it was, but they were not banished nor degraded. She did not mislike loveliness, nor misery it, but she gave it the place and office of witness, that it might preach of Him from whom it had caught some hint and reflection of His own eternal and uncreated Beauty.

For she gently told them "All men are vain . . . who by these good things that are seen understand not Him who is, neither, by attending to the works, have acknowledged who was the Workman . . . with whose Beauty if they being delighted took them to be gods, let them know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful than they: for the First Author of beauty made all those things. Or, if they admired their power and effects, let them understand by them that He that made them is mightier than they. For by the greatness of the beauty . . . the Creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby."

So that the Arts, driven from the dead temples, were not exiled from the Living Church, but given their home and duty in it. They were not thrust down and shamed, but raised from a false function of helpless and idle goddesshood to a true function of helpful and real service.

This, then, was the new and true office of all Arts in the Church: they were to be her mouthpiece and her witness, bearing, under her inspiration, a lovely testimony to Divine beauty. In all the ugly and mean jostle of common life they were to remind man of the eternal and ineffable serenity of God's perfection. Man's worship they should no longer seize halfway to heaven: but, with fingers ever pointed upward, they were to bid him look above the world for the supreme

and sole object of adoration. This noble function we see exercised by the Arts in all the story of the Church in her freedom and supremacy. She was never their foe, but their grave and guiding Mother and Mistress; and it is from the Church that the modern world has received the Arts. But as she held them to their high vocation, so they, in the good days, when the world was Christendom learning at the Church's knee, accepted with proud loyalty their honoured place in her economy. But, alas, there came the ugly and ruinous revolt that willed to dethrone the Church, and changed the noble ideal of united Christendom into the poor makeshift of a split-up Europe. And to the new notions the idea of service was repugnant, and seemed servile, for the inner spirit of the revolt was not monarchic but anarchic. And to anarchy the noble function of ordered service, the highest man and his works can hold towards God, appears mere serfdom.

In the new scheme of things they who had been proud to be servants set themselves to be rivals and adversaries. The Arts too fell into infection, and slipped away; instead of being honourable servants of the Church, and proud helpers in her Divine work, they would be tale-bearers against her, and traitors, libellous. From her they would take no more guidance, nor inspiration; her reproofs they would not bear, her canons they would forget and disallow.

The ripe fruit of the old ways was, in literature, such poets as Dante, in sculpture and painting such Masters as Michelangelo and Rafael; the latest, but forever unripe and unwholesome fruit of the new revolt is, in Art, God save the mark, the Post-Impressionists and Futurists, in literature the *Massa Damnata* of current

fiction—if that can be called current which loves to crawl and snuff its inspiration from the dung and slime of a civilisation turned rotten.

In the good days when Arts were content to be learners of the Church, they taught with a clear coherent message, for they shared in presenting her noble and unearthly lesson: no longer willing to learn of her, they have nothing to teach, having lost cognizance of their own meaning. In a futile and trivial ambition to rank above her they have fallen beneath themselves. Despising the old serene simplicity, they are tangled in a webbed confusion of dust and dirt and throttled contradiction. Pointing no longer upward beyond man, they seek to reflect man only, and him they reflect littled and more mean, more bestial and more base. If, in spite of themselves, they are Balaam-prophets, unwilling witnesses on God's side, it is no more by the infinite, sublime, if ever unsatisfied and unavailing effort to depict Divine loveliness, but by proving to the sad angels how ugly man without God is bound to be.

But, though the aim of the Great Revolt was to dethrone the Church and destroy her, she is, in fact, neither destroyed nor dethroned. Her kingdom on earth may have, for a moment, no territorial frontier, but it smiles at all boundary-limits and governs the hearts of loyal subjects in every realm and every clime, and her vigour is not enfeebled in her august and venerable age. In all the world she has her lieges, who in every tongue proclaim their loyalty and their love: so that, wherever her rule is felt, the function of literature is to-day what it was of old, to learn and so to teach, not a rival message, nor a different, from that of the Mother and Mistress herself, but the same

message pitched in a minor key: nor with an independent, rebel or rival, authority, but, as it were, by grace of faculties derived from her, and so with a sanction incomparably higher than any that could be that of literature herself, were she to set herself apart in a windy autonomy of her own.

It is true that in this viceroyalty of literature there are many provinces, not alike in function nor equal in dignity and importance. There are, for instance, high alpine regions such as that of theology, which lift white summits up towards heaven itself: there are foot-hills of philosophy that he must first conquer who would mount those loftier heights.

There is history, time's memory, upon whose chaplet she links together her beads of experience lest they scatter and be lost. There is biography, which is a sort of gallery of portraits in the wider palace of history itself.

When all these are laid by literature in the lap of her great Mother the Church, they hold a consistency and coherency, a significance and a purpose, that else they would have lost, and must lose.

But literature has regions less grave and perhaps less august, but grateful to tired and busy feet: her pleasaunces, fragrant and welcome. For the Church herself knows that all work and no play will make of her sons but dull children: so she has her gardens, and her playing-fields, many flowered, with mimic rocks that only seem to frown, and mimic heights that fancy may climb and break no bones. There is the lovely land of poesy, and all the intricate sweet forest of romance. These are set lower, certainly, than those mountain-realms of theology, and philosophy, and history. But though they seem in comparison to be of the plains,

yet are they upland too, and they also, if their inspiration be true, point upward to horizons where earth's lips are lifted to kiss the hem of heaven's clean garment. In an age over practical, as the empty and false-flattering phrase goes, an age of common and mean purposes, poetry is the more essential, the more indispensable. To the dull it may seem the mere science of fine and fair words, but in reality it is a golden bridge that carries us, by high speech, arched far above the low swamps of petty ideals, into an enchanted, half-unearthly, land of nobler and so truer thoughts, whose fruit must be nobler desires and less sordid deeds. For noble speech can be born only of noble thought, and be in turn its mother, and from nobler thinking nobler doing is fain to spring.

Mere thoughts are not so barren, nor so insignificant as the prim and smug would pretend, to whom all thinking, except calculation, is uneasy and wasteful: the Church has never held it so; that is why, in her wide embrace, contemplative Religion has ever held so secure and so warm a welcome. And to contemplation no leaf on any tree in all God's garden is meaningless: the Pantheist saw in everything a God, the Contemplative sees God through everything, and reads His Name ineffable in all the alphabet whose letters are this earth and the universe of stars.

The poet preaches of God though his song may seem, to the deaf, whose ears are wool-stopped with avarice, no sermon. No decent human being can read any true poem without a lifting of his soul, and that at its best is prayer: at its worst it is better than lying among the pots. The poet's clear song lights a clearer fire among the thorns of our commonplace, we catch from him alpine glimpses that touch close upon the

heavens, his high thought begets a higher thought in us than our own, and each higher thought, by the Divine compassion, tends upward to the highest.

Confronted with such ideas as are generated by great poetry, in every reader capable of conceiving ideas at all, mean things are forced to show their meanness; low and pedestrian purposes are stripped and made to show their beggarly nakedness. Poetry is not utilitarian, and to them who need it most it seems useless, but its use is to remind us of matters too willingly forgotten by an age that is disposed to reckon nothing golden except money. Life, it compels us to bear in mind, is more than meat.

Poetry is the irreconcilable foe of smug and fustian self-complacency, and self-content: and of all repentance and true betterment the subtlest enemy is self-satisfaction among mean ideas and abject purposes.

In all true and great poetry there is something eternal, and some protest against our over-estimate of what is temporary and of passing consequence: its appeal is never to fashion or whim, but to what is as old as man himself, and is therefore new in every age. All temporary verse dies with the period that occasioned it, or survives it only by a narrow space as a mere monument, with a merely quaint and archaic interest.

So it is that we find the best poetry the world possesses among its oldest. And this eternal spirit in real and great poetry gives to it a function and use whose importance cannot easily be exaggerated. It serves by its very nature as a protest against the irritable spirit of novelty, shallow fashion-worship, and mean absorption in matters of trivial and temporary

significance: and against them it is, in its measure, a medicine and antidote.

To my thinking no age ever needed poetry more than this: and it is wanting precisely because it is needed. Our Miltons are mostly mute, or else inglorious.

The scope of prose romance is not so high, nor does it stretch down so deep into the roots of humanity. But the scope is, perhaps, wider. It may reach some to whom, as yet, poetry is impossible: and to poetry it may serve as the porch and preparation. For many incapable at first of savouring great poets may be introduced to it by the easier appreciation of prose romance.

The themes of romance seem more varied, and perhaps more intimate and more homely, though it is not to be forgotten that a supreme poetic genius, like Homer's, can appeal with eternal force to the heart of mankind when dealing with things most homely and most simple.

Prose romance can never be the rival of poetry, it is her younger sister, conscious of a less exalted sphere, and venerating without emulation her elder's more august dignity. The arc of each circle is often touching, but never intersects. A true poem, even an epic, can never be merely a metrical tale, and a prose romance is never to aim at being a long unversed poem with chapters for cantos.

Nevertheless in genuine romance there is ever discernible its kinship with poetry: it will not deal with common and trivial things or themes. It moves on a higher plane than common experience; and its aim is ideal truth not sordid or servile realism. For ideal truth is not imprisoned behind the bars of mere actual occurrence, else would not the Master Himself have taught in parables.

Its realm is not bounded by the frontiers of dull fact : it does not confine itself to the literal reproduction of figures that have been seen, and of events that have happened precisely thus, in these identical circumstances : but aims at a certain ideal presentation.

The supreme sculptor draws out of shapeless and inert marble forms of men more perfect than any experience has installed in his memory ; the supreme romanticist fills his stage with men and women that are nobly human yet surpass any he may have met, or his reader might have imagined. He is not to pretend that all good men are angels, but he is not to seek his type among men by whom the type has been most littled, and most degraded. In this selection and presentation of higher types he does not pander to human vanity, but the reverse : for reading of men that are men but nobler than ourselves does not flatter our self-love, but rather breeds in us a wholesome shame of ourselves. Nor is he insincere, but only loyal. For none treats man with more brutal violence than he who draws the portrait of a beast and writes under it *This is Man*. It is odd that they who are most disposed to pretend there is no God, and that man needs none but himself, are the most inveterate in stripping man of all divine resemblance or reminiscence. You would suppose they would depict man a demi-God, whereas it is precisely they who insist on writing him down a pig.

Nor is this ideal presentation of man, in romance, a forgetfulness of his fall, and an ignoring of original sin ; it is not a taint of heresy ; the Manicheans were the heretics, who made man Satan's creature. It is but a reminder that man is God's man still and after all ; that the fall itself was not the end of the story of



God and man, nor God's last word in creation. It is the pornographist, who, while disbelieving in it, witnesses to man's fall in the first Adam, and refuses to witness to his resurrection in the second; so, in one foul word, he libels man and God.

Yet, for all this, in high romance there is no affectation; it does not make mealy-mouthed pretence that men are all good, or that all good men are angelic. Cardinal Newman has bidden us realise that all the actions even of all the saints were not always saintly; and romance is not hagiology; the story of some saint's life may lend itself to the most perfect romance, but all romance cannot and does not deal with lives of saints. For mankind, as a whole, has never been precisely saintly, and with mankind as a whole romance has concern. It is sufficient that it sets its stage on a plane elevated above that of common life; upon that stage all the figures cannot be all white. It must have shadow, or its light will be as flat as it is false. And it is a stupidity, as well as a mistake, to assume that good moral can only be afforded by good men. The business of high romance is not to stock literature with a sort of Sunday-school story-book that is, in fact, not literature at all. If it were, then would it be as powerless as it would be useless to do that service to religion which I think it is capable of doing—namely of catching the attention and enlisting the interest of readers who will only read that which they perceive to be literature. Such readers may be good Catholics, but they may also be Catholics who are not so good as they might be, and they may not be Catholics at all. In these two latter classes some are little likely to be benefited by a sermon or by a tract; for they neither love to hear the one nor to read the other. Yet they

will read a book that strikes them as worth reading, and which does not strike them as a thinly-veiled sermon. Is it not worth while to try and engage their attention, to make some effort to draw their notice back to higher thoughts than those of contemporary fad and fancy and fashion, to those more ideal themes which romance has for its scope? If no more were done than to help them to a higher taste in recreative reading, to give them some better substitute for the current fiction of our day, which is neither literature nor romance, I think much would be done. But more may be done; by such romance as I am trying to indicate their attention may be brought back to the noble picture of Catholic faith in practice, to stirring events, and great personages of the past: to times when men, however wrong and passionate, lawless even, were marked by a simpler spirit; when, with all their faults and frequent disobedience, they were children of the Church, and were still apt to turn to her for comfort in sorrow, and refuge in adversity, keen to realise that she was indispensable and they could not do without her. Perhaps it may seem that I harp too much on the past as the theme of romance; but is it not the case that the present day is too much pre-occupied with itself, and that, therefore, the diversion of its attention to the great and romantic stories of other days is wholesome? We must, I know, live in the present and act in it, but by realising that other ages were as much alive once as we are now, we are made to realise that matters which absorb us to-day may not after all be of such final significance as we suppose; that our fuss and fume, our rancours and our jealousies, are not of eternal importance? It seems to me that from the pages of high romance we may draw

a more serene patience, and a more practical remembrance that it is by God, and not by us, that the world is ruled; that somehow, after all our boggling and our crossness, His Providence unties our knots, and may correct our blunders. We see our own follies and our own violence reflected in the calm mirror of the past, and yet see that the world was there then, as it is now, and that God was over the world all the time; as the world is here now, and God is over us all still.

If it be said that history should do this, I would be tempted to reply that in history there may be as much fiction as there is history in romance: and further that many who will not read history will read romance. And, further still, that history, like art, is long: that a mouthful of history is not much good, but often the reverse: that in a single work of fine romance there is apt to be a completeness hardly to be found in a single volume, or a single epoch of scientific history. The lesson of one chapter, or even of one epoch in history, however patent it may seem, is often untrue if taken alone, and needs the correction and adjustment of many later chapters and epochs. The romanticist may borrow from an earlier page, and forestall a later, in a manner that could not be tolerated in a historian.

The story of the Church, of her Popes, and of her saints, of her heroes, and of her humbler servants offers a wide field, still almost untouched by the romanticist.

But it is not suggested that all romance must be ecclesiological, nor that her theme must be exclusively, or always even definitely, I mean obviously, what is called religious. To insist on that would be to clip her wings, and limit her audience, and that in such a manner as to shut against her voice exactly those ears which, in my thinking, we most need to catch.

It seems, indeed, to be assumed by some that a Catholic romanticist has no business to write otherwise than as if he were addressing a Catholic congregation and from a Catholic pulpit: in that case it is pretty sure that only Catholics will listen, and that any hope of drawing towards the Church those who are outside must form none of his ambition.

The Catholic pulpit exists for Catholics, and there is no reason for using it as though it were assumed that half the congregation at least were non-Catholics: the Church is what she is, and those who do not like her as she is cannot be cajoled into liking her by half-stripping her, and dressing her up in Reformation garments. Such a method might make our people half-Protestant, but could never make Protestants, not in church at all most likely, become Catholic.

But the function of romance is not identical with that of the pulpit: it may attract the indifferent towards the consideration of subjects which will lead the reader on to friendlier interest in the Church, her children and her august story: it may remind a world much oblivious of the past how the present was made, and compel it to call to mind that religion is not the negligible factor in humanity that many are now eager to make it. What painting has done for religion in one field, what architecture has done in another, that also romance may do in her own.

Though it be true that romance, and even high romance, is not limited to themes explicitly religious, yet is it also true that all true romance will hold some sort of parable: for every genuine reflection of life must be a parable, as life itself is one. For some readers, indeed, a parable must be terribly obvious, or they will see none in it: but must every writer write

always only for the dullest, least apprehensive and least sympathetic, reader? All readers are not dull, nor stupid, nor captious; priggishness is never literary: must every writer be always currying favour with stupidity and dullness? Must his teaching be always labelled and placarded, his moral marked in plain figures like the price on a ready-made cheap garment, that is supposed to fit the public, but fits no one in particular? I cannot help thinking that some readers might learn more morality from a course of the Waverley novels than from a course of mealy-mouthed tract-like tales on the seven capital offences and their opposed virtues. I am sure they would learn more from King Lear than from the excellent Martin Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy.

One who knew books well said that he knew no spiritual reading better than Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. That I honour as a great saying, and a man who was not spiritual could not have made it. Yet *Vanity Fair* is by no means all white light; it would never satisfy those critics who demand of the romanticist that he should paint only white figures in clear relief against a white background.

All fine writers of English fiction have not, of course, been so cleanly as Sir Walter Scott or Thackeray: to cite two, and two who are no favourites of my own, Smollett was not and Fielding was not. And neither, though they wrote with genius, wrote genuine romance. Even from them, though we cannot admit them as teachers what to do, we may learn, to borrow Sir Francis Burnand's delightful phrase, what to don't.

And they who care to scan pictures of past life, in phases that no one can regret should be past, will consider that they have an interest and a value. Smollett

and Hume together wrote a history of England, and no one could gather from the whole of it what England, in any period they deal with, was like, half so well as he could gather what some sorts of English life were like in the period sketched by Smollett alone in his brutal novels.

This portraiture, or even caricature-portraiture, of certain periods and their phases, is one of the functions, if a minor one, of fiction. And it may be that by its aid we gather a more accurate and living picture than any history, by herself, can give us. Perhaps the ages now called Dark would not seem to us now so obscure if they too had had their novelists. Shadowy and vague figures, that move like phantoms because only their names, and certain of their deeds, are passed down to us by history, would have more reality and more significance had they also, in their day or near it, been pressed into the service of romance. We said above that one great use of poetry is its appeal from what is temporary and contemporary to interests that are eternal and unchanging: and romance, in its measure, has the same effect. It widens our view by the mere force of altering it; that is, by compelling some exercise of the faculty called imagination, which does not mean pretending, but the realisation of images. To some extent this lifts us out of ourselves, and suspends our selfishness and self-absorption; for it knocks, as it were, the centre of gravity outside ourselves; and that is no mean function, nor trivial result. Romance tends to extend our humanity and deepen its sympathies by showing us ourselves as parts of the great river of all life, flowing down from the past and flowing on to the future; is this bad for our charity or our humility? That which is called, and is not, realism is a special

idiosyncrasy of our present day: it is twin-sister of a shallow and blind materialism: and true romance is its sworn foe. For the stage of romance is the lofty and the ideal; its standards are not weights and measures, and nothing is more alien from it than the apotheosis of material success or of money. Of all dumb beasts the last to be idolised in romance is the golden calf.

Romance is not the business of life, and life is very busy: but the busiest seek recreation, and a recreation that forces us to remember that all life is not the making of money is not the meanest. And romance is opposed to worldliness, which is an excess of individualism, and an absorption in the pursuit of material, temporary things, for romance is impersonal and heroic. Its values are not those of the Stock Exchange, nor of Mayfair. Again in all true romance we are brought in presence of pathos and of beauty; and selfishness can have no natural antidote more poignant than pathos, which is its solvent; for selfishness arrives by a thickening and a hardening of the heart God gave us. The ugliness of our own meanness is brought inevitably to our notice by ideal pictures of beauty. Sordid aims and satisfactions cannot but be made uneasy in their seat by such contrasts as Romance propounds.

It will be seen that I think nobly of romance, as Malvolio did of the soul. Its function seems to me neither trivial nor slight. That the soul is noble makes them more indefensible who have dealt ignobly with it: and the same is true of such as deal ignobly with romance. But of them I have neither time to treat here, nor inclination.

It is enough to repeat that romance should be a worthy relaxation of tired and jaded minds, to whom a brief escape into her golden realm is like a little

uncostly holiday from the stress of toil, and the pre-occupation of dull mechanical affairs. In this use of it many, I think, might indulge more, with gain to themselves. There are some, perhaps, who are too busy, though the busy need it most: but there are many others who might save for it, with no loss to their souls, some of the time they spend in talk. And we must say, too, that those fiction-mongers, to whom we need not allude more precisely, by whom fiction has been dragged down, have so treated what should be a relief to minds fatigued, that in their hands it has become a thing intolerable to anyone with any mind at all.

In all that I have tried to say it may seem that, while on the whole I have said too much, not enough has been said of Catholic literature in particular: my reason is this. In one sense I would submit that there is no such a thing, apart from such specialised subjects as theology, as Catholic literature: in another that all literature, that is true literature at all, is Catholic: that is, that all true literature is a part of the common inheritance which belongs to us and all men. In this fashion, it would seem, the Church herself has dealt with literature, never disinheriting herself of what even heathen wisdom and beauty have left to us, and never sparing her condemnation of what was vile or untrue, because it was written by a Catholic.

If we come specially to the function of Catholic makers of literature, I have already tried, though hastily and inadequately, and chiefly by inference, to imply what it seems to me to be: viz. that, as of old, so should it be now and always: literature, like all arts, is no false goddess, but a true servant. She must boast no autonomy. Her jurisdiction is not inherent,



but delegated : there is really no republic of letters : but a province of letters within the universal Viceroyalty of the Church : to which it owes obedience, from whence, if it is to be living and coherent, it must draw guidance and inspiration too. Sitting at her feet, encouraged by her urbane glance of approval or smile of condescension, our writers will not be scribes teaching they know not what, but, by ever learning, they will know what they teach, and they will teach by a higher authority than their own. Its function can never be that of the Church, its office is not hers, but it will be not her rebel but her child. And even when at play, it may remind us of those other children, playing about the feet of the Master Himself, who would not have them driven away, nor see in their presence there any interruption of His own august lesson.

## AN ESSAY ON ESSAYISTS

"DON'T tell me," said an elderly lady in my hearing.  
"I *know* it isn't round."

"It is," suggested her nephew, "an oblate spheroid."

"Oblong or no, nothing will make me believe that the churches in New Zealand hang down like chandeliers."

Microbes she also scouted—M'Crawbies, as the Scotch chemist called them. Doctors, she averred, invented them, for their own purposes; just as they invented appendicitis, about the time each of them took to having a private nursing home of his own. Who, she asked, ever heard of a doctor's wife with appendicitis?

Her nephew feebly urged that all mankind was against her. But she didn't care sixpence for mankind, and had he counted mankind? On a universal census, not one per cent., she said, of the human race would be found to believe in the rotundity of this earth or in microbes.

"And one per cent.," she observed with finality, "is what I never would put up with."

I do believe in microbes: for is it not obvious that an illiterate brute of a microbe fell in with Mr. Birrell, bit him, and turned him from letters to politics? Why on earth else should a man, who might still be giving us *Obiter Dicta*, be frittering away time that really belongs to the public in the dismal trivialities of party politics? It would serve him right if some

Chancellor of the Exchequer were to throw up his excursions and alarms in the undiscovered country of finance, and try his hand on Essays on Mr. Birrell's favourite topic—Cardinal Newman, say, or George Borrow. If asked whether he knew how, such a Chancellor might reply, like the man who was asked if he could play the German flute, "I don't know. I haven't tried."

We have some very good essayists still, and Mr. Birrell is the most perfect essayist living, nor would he take any but a very high place if ranked with those who are living no longer.

Macaulay was not precisely an essayist, though the pieces to which he assigned the name will always be delightful reading, and are assumed by young persons to be the models of what essays should be.

An essay, according to the Great Lexicographer, is (1) an attempt, an endeavour; (2) a loose sally of the mind, irregular, indigested piece; (3) a trial, an experiment; (4) a first taste of anything. Macaulay never attempted, nor endeavoured, he achieved: his mind had no loose sallies; and there were no indigested pieces in him, for he was careful to swallow nothing that was hard: his essays were not trials, nor experiments, but *ex cathedra* pronouncements; nor were they exactly first tastes, but rather solid meals. Those essays of Macaulay's that deal with books are not really essays, but a sort of long reviews, though not so much reviews of the books that gave him pretext as of the subjects dealt with in the books. At all events they are not suggestions, but measured and weighty statements; last words rather than first tastes,

Hazlitt was no more, or scarcely more, an essayist than Macaulay, in the strict sense—not that your true

essayist ever is strict. Macaulay and Hazlitt were as strict as Dr. Keate, and "loose sallies" and "indigested pieces" were the last thing they would have put in print. When they had anything to write they seized the poker—but they could not have written an essay on it: Lamb could have written a delightful series on it, or on the lid of the tea-kettle: but he could not have been strict—for he was a prince, nay, an Emperor of Essayists. Hazlitt was only an Antipope, who could issue nothing more trivial than definitions. He had, for an essayist, too much to say. So had Macaulay. An essay should not contain too much—Mr. G. S. Street is a charming essayist.

Of course style is half the battle with an essayist, and style was what Hazlitt and Macaulay both had—more than either of them knew what to do with. But both were what is called exact thinkers, that is, they thought exactly what they thought, and could not perceive that anybody had any business to think differently. Elia did not invariably state precisely what he thought, but smilingly suggested what other people might think if they had wit enough. Flat statement is seldom urbane, and dear Charles was always urbane, and never flat: of chill statement he is as niggard as Hazlitt and Macaulay are open-handed. He did not want to corner you: if he found you put in the corner, he merely came behind and whispered in your ear what funny things you might see in the paper on the wall.

That is your true essayist. It is not his business to make you yell, or beat your breast: nor even to force you to *éclater de rire*—burst out at the back, as the schoolboy translated it: a smile is all he aims at calling up, or a sigh with a half smile in it.

Like Lamb, whom I am sure he reveres and loves, Mr. G. S. Street is nothing if he is not urbane. He calls for terrible retribution on his foes, but it is as clear as daylight he has none. It is his unmealy-mouthed way of praying for their conversion and ultimate reward. He never laughs, but a very gentle smile is never far off. He never falls flat, and never kicks you high off your feet into regions where the air is rarefied: the first floor of Piccadilly is the worst you have to fear from any impetus he may impart. And he never has too much to say: an eyebrow, even a cocked one, would be too heavy a theme for him—and some essayists' eyebrows are like some statesmen's moustaches. He is diffident of statement: even his hints are not broad hints. A whole essay of his is mostly a parenthesis *en route* to a conclusion never arrived at—for so few things are concluded till the end of the world: and hurry is even more repugnant to Mr. Street than being kept waiting for dinner. What would really best illustrate his genius would be an essay that might go on forever, and find us all still in suspense when the Archangel's trump should sound. No, not suspense: that suggests hanging: and all Mr. Street wants is to lift a deliberate leg of yours and never set it down again precisely anywhere.

When we say your true essay should not contain too much, else it can be no first taste, nor loose sally of the mind, nor irregular indigested piece; and add that Mr. Street is an essayist to the backbone, it is not a spiteful way of implying that he has nothing to say, and says it. He says a great deal, and he has so much to say besides that he never gets it all out. If he starts an essay on Flat Candlesticks, the age in which he lives is brought so overwhelmingly to his mind by the idea

of flatness in general that he cannot, that day, get nearer to his title-subject than the conversation of men at his club. He never goes back to Candlesticks, but tries to, in a later essay on Extinguishers: vain attempt! Far from being led thence, by an easy short cut, to the little hole in the handle of the candlestick where the extinguisher should be, and so to the candlestick itself—he can but realise that, in an age of electric light, there is no need of extinguishers at all; and all his perfect phrasing is wanted for a protest against extinguishing as currently practised. If you really want to read about Flat Candlesticks you had better study the Army and Navy Stores Catalogue.

If you don't care much for Mr. Street you will not like him at all. If you really love real essays you will be delighted with him. Many of his qualities are Lamb-like, though he is less cheerful and less pathetic than Lamb, because he reflects the spirit not of Elia's age, but of his own: and Mr. Street's age is neither cheerful nor pathetic.

Speaking of age in another sense, I do not think the true essayist is ever quite young. Youth is not the period of "attempts" and "endeavours": it counts on full achievement and takes it for granted. Macaulay might have written his essays at one-and-twenty, and had all the equipment for doing so: there is no wistful afternoon light on them, as there is on Lamb's—as there is, too, on Mr. Street's: but those long level rays in Elia are at once homely and ethereal: I find Mr. Street less intimate, for all his familiarity, and more worldly. Comparisons are odious, but I do not believe Mr. Street will think this one impudent; to be compared with Lamb at all, he would accept as a flattery—if only he could believe the comparer knew anything about it.

Style has been mentioned as half the battle with an essayist: Lamb's is unapproachable—and indefinable, as all really perfect style is. Mr. Street's is so good that there is nothing good to be said about it, which I take to be a proof of excellence. Of Macaulay's style, and of Carlyle's, almost anybody might write pages: and the more was said the less would be proved. Of Cardinal Newman's very little could be written, at all events in the way of description. George Borrow has a style of his own, perfect in its kind, and no one could say what it is. What can be said of Jane Austen's? The best that can be said, which no one could say of Macaulay's, is that you may know her by heart and never suspect its existence. For by her style is not meant her wit, nor her unique perfection of phrasing, nor her capacity of making words her servants to run errands and bring you exact and inimitable likenesses.

Mr. Street has all sorts of essays: those on anything except anything in particular: those on people—on himself, for instance, under various aliases: and those on certain personages. In these last his manner is altogether different. To say they are first-rate is trite for expression, but it is high praise, and it is, like all praise worth having, far within the mark.

His essays on Sarah Jennings, on Byron, on Charles James Fox, on Horace Walpole, and on George Selwyn deal with themes that have been treated continually, and nothing better has been said by any one upon them. That on the Great Duchess is the best—but the others need not be jealous. That they should be original, when so much has been said already, is as miraculous as that Macaulay should not have been a prig, and as true. To the last-named great man we must always owe an incalculable debt, and chiefly for

his letters and journals, himself, in fact: and for the fact, above all, that, in spite of his father, he never became a prig.

To Mr. Street the present writer owes not an apology but an explanation. Among his quite excellent essays on people is one on Anthony Trollope, that I only read for the first time the other day. It says many things that I myself have tried to say in an Essay on a Novelist's Novel-Reading in the hands, for many months, of the Editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, but still unpublished. Had I known they had been said better already, I should not have been so silly as to say them again. They come to this, that the apologetic tone affected by Trollope's critics is an impudence and an absurdity: Mr. Street mentions one of those critics, though not by name, and I alluded to him—perhaps not even in the singular number, but the criticism we both meant appeared some years ago—in the *Nineteenth Century*, I think.

Mr. Street is the last man to accuse me of pilfering his opinions. Holding Trollope as high as he does, he will only be glad that even an inexperienced judge should share his wrath at the systematic belittling of one of our greatest writers of fiction. We must both hope that there are seven thousand in Israel besides ourselves who have not bowed the knee to this Baal of stupidity.

Mr. Street, like Ecclesiastes, is very bold, and in one particular he places, and rightly places, Trollope above even Jane Austen. He might have placed him above her in another: in tenderness and pathos. All that Jane Austen did she did perfectly; all that she gives is exquisite of its sort. But there was much she had no mind to do, and much that she never tried to give. Emotion she almost wholly ignores: when Lydia dis-



graces herself and her family, even Elizabeth is only *shocked*: there is nothing deeper: and in no other instance is there anything so deep. Of either pathos or tenderness there is no instance at all: the instances of both in Trollope's books are far too many for profitable citation.

But neither Trollope nor Miss Austen belongs to an essay on essayists, and we must leave them—reluctantly, as we always do leave them.

Fielding, who was, I take it, the first of the modern novelists, was an essayist even in his novels: for his introductions are obviously essays, and extremely good ones. Here, however, we are concerned with living essayists, though they must, naturally, remind us by comparison, or contrast, with their ancestors.

Another essayist whom to read must always be a pleasure is Mr. Herbert Paul. He has much knowledge, and much sympathy; the best taste, and a fine faculty of appreciation. He is also a very witty quoter: and this happy gift is of priceless service to readers. A writer with a knack of remembering the best things that have been said about everything of which he treats lays us all under an obligation that we can only repay by gratitude.

His themes are more definite than is commonly the case with Mr. Street: he is more wont to give a heading that tells you what you are to expect: but he gives more than you have any right to expect, and it is given in a delightful manner. He is also more apt than Mr. Street to finish up: more liable to bring you somewhere and leave you there. And he is more impersonal: it is not his business to confide in you about yourself: he deals with persons of recognised importance.

Nor is he whimsical. Since Elia was the prince and pattern of all essayists of all time to come, I think an essayist should have whimsies. This is not saying that you should read Mr. Street, and not read Mr. Paul; it behoves you to read both. It is not even a personal profession of faith—that I enjoy Mr. Street more than I enjoy Mr. Herbert Paul; but the enjoyment yielded by each is of a different quality. Any intelligent reader must find amusement and high pleasure in reading Mr. Paul's essays; but unless you like literature for its own sake, Mr. Street may be one too many for you; some of his pieces are bits of literature and nothing else at all.

In one respect I like Mr. Paul best; he does not reflect the depression, or the dogged resolve not to be depressed, of our elderly young century. In another I like Mr. Street best; he has a good word for Charles II and another for James II—at all events he calls by their right names William III's traitors, whom he dismissed that he might get drunk in peace with his Dutch minions. Mr. Paul does not like to hear the Prince of Orange mentioned as a second-rate Dutchman. And Mr. Street admires as she deserves William's pious and filially dutiful consort.

That a critic so full of letters as Mr. Street should be eager to do justice to Sterne is altogether to his credit. *Tristram Shandy* is unique in literature, and Mr. Street could not care for literature and belittle it; he can quote it, as only those who love it would know how; but to hesitate in confessing that it is often simply impure is a mere derangement of epitaphs. "Laughter," urges Mr. Paul, "is quite incompatible with prurience." Is it? If you are prepared to admit the theory Mr. Paul's contention is half carried, for, with two excep-

tions, "there is," he maintains, "hardly a dull page in *Tristram Shandy*."

But is indecency always dull? Was Congreve dull or decent? Mr. Paul is not content to prove that as a book *Tristram Shandy* is not immoral. To do so might involve a good deal of refining and defining as to what an immoral book is; but I am not prepared to say it could not be done. I am forced to say that he has failed in proving that it is not in many places wilfully and designedly impure, suggesting, and meant to suggest, impure images and fancies.

Mr. Birrell, we set out by saying, is the most delightful of living essayists. We said of Mr. Paul that even readers who know but little of books must read him with extraordinary pleasure—provided, of course, they do not really dislike reading altogether. The same is true of Mr. Birrell, though he is "all over" books, as Mr. Carnegie is "all over" libraries. I should think he is the best-read man in the kingdom—democracy I mean; what he has not read would be much quicker to tell than what he has. And books are his playmates; so that, when he bids you come and join his play, you may be sure of good sport and good company. His essays are never too long; and they have so compact a completeness that they scarcely seem too short. He is impishly witty, and full of exhilarating spirits, his sympathy can reach anywhere; and, if he skips with a flippant posture now and then, he has more reverence than hundreds of writers who have not light-heartedness enough to be ever flippant. His essays on books and their writers are really essays, and not reviews or epitomes. He is urbane, like Elia; and often queer, though with a queerness unlike his. His admiration for everything good is an education in

taste for those who have none, and an encouragement to those who have a little. He is never gushing nor ecstatic; and he could not learn to be a prig if he devoted all his great powers during the continuance of the present Ministry to the attempt.

I read the other day that he hates Nonconformists; his discriminating reverence for John Wesley does not prove the contrary; for Wesley was not a Nonconformist; nor is the statement supported by the fun he sometimes pokes at Nonconformists. But if he hates anybody, he hates no body of men; and would certainly never parade dislike of the body to which his father belonged. It was a fond thing vainly invented to breed lovers' quarrels between the Minister and a wide section of the dismal party to which he, by Fate's inscrutable decree, belongs.

Hatred is not Mr. Birrell's strong point; in that matter he would hardly have passed muster with Dr. Johnson's theory—if the doctor himself would have passed it; for it is hard to perceive whom he really hated; those he gored and tossed he liked all the better, that duty done. He never precisely gored Wilkes, but he evidently liked him in spite of that and everything. Perhaps, after all, there may be other ways of being a good liker than that of being a good hater.

If Southey had been "worthy to know" Mr. Birrell it would be interesting to read a colloquy by him between the latter and the Great Lexicographer. Would the modern Minister's admiration have disarmed the doctor's wit? It might be safer to trust to the quondam Laureate, who had a gift that way; especially as he would not leave much of Mr. Birrell's, and wit was as disarming to Johnson as flattery—not that he

disliked flattery in proper doses, from such as knew how to hold the spoon. And better than flattery he liked affection. That was why he had a sincere kindness for Boswell, whose flattery was served in buckets, and Mrs. Thrale, whom he must have known was as vain as James I and no wiser than the Queen of Sheba.

Mr. Birrell refuses to believe that Johnson was a vile Tory; not that it makes a pennyworth of difference. Mr. Birrell's affections are not political; they are rooted in letters and humanity, where Johnson stands impregnable. There too stands Cowper, and nowhere is tenderer sympathy and more generous admiration yielded to that great, forlorn, and sweet genius than in Mr. Birrell's brief essay upon him.

Of Borrow and of Gibbon he writes, as the theme needs, in different vein. Borrow cannot be advocated, and no pleading will make him appreciated by such as do not appreciate him; he can but be introduced, "Lavengro—your tuppenny-ha'penny self." It is an extraordinary tribute to Borrow that Catholics never mind him. He writes vicious nonsense about the Church, and those to whom the Church is sacred, and one cannot help wishing he hadn't; but they skip it, once they know the place, and it never prevents them if they care for books, from loving *Lavengro* and the *Bible in Spain*. The present writer likes the latter best of the two; for it is interesting all through, and some parts of *Lavengro* are not; nor is it unpleasant to note that Borrow in Spain, in spite of all his abhorrence of priests, was not badly treated by them; for my part I believe they liked him. Invincible ignorance is very endearing, so is colossal indiscretion.

Some writers are very economical; they scarcely like to put too much in one essay, foreseeing they may

need it in another; Mr. Birrell is frightfully extravagant. He never looks ahead, nor keeps anything back; you are welcome to every penny in his pocket, and it is not only with the small change he is lavish; it all comes out, gold and silver as well. He can afford it; while you are staring at his affluence he pats you on the nose with his wand, and brings a sovereign out of the bridge of it, and another out of your chin, and three or four from your forehead, where no one could have dreamt of it. He will squeeze half a dozen good things into half as many lines; and, while you are laughing, he draws whole batches of fresh eggs out of the crown of your hat—absent-mindedly as it were; and, without sitting on them, hatches you lively broods of chirpy, funny chickens, that run about with delightful twitterings. He is a master of asides; in that alluring fashion he quotes and alludes; as if there really was not time to tell you all he wants except in parentheses. One such aside is often an essay in itself; half a dozen would sum up more than half the intellectual stock-in-trade of the average man.

He is a noble admirer; he has an instinct for the best things everywhere. Johnson and Gibbon, Cowper and Wesley, Carlyle and Newman, Borrow and Browning, to each he yields, with the same sincerity, the same generous tribute of appreciation and understanding. Macaulay could not have appreciated Newman nor any cardinal, if he had tried; and he never did try. To appreciate anything obsolete he felt to be a waste of time; and, what Newman stood for Macaulay thought obsolete; the Catholic faith appeared to him merely a feature of the Middle Ages.

The only writer of a great book to whom it seems to me Mr. Birrell falls short of being just is Benvenuto

Cellini; to the *Rogue's Memoirs* themselves he yields delighted admiration. I would not insist on his admiring their author. But he calls him flatly rogue, and repeats the judgment at the top of every page. He does not call him hypocrite, nor leave you liberty to do so. Nevertheless I think he is hard on him. Of his great genius, except as a narrator, he scarcely speaks; of the singular qualities that enabled him to hold the terms he did hold with Popes and Kings he says very little indeed. I doubt if Clement VII, Paul III, or Francis I, who knew him perfectly, set him down as a mere scoundrel. He did some shocking things, and avows them; but they were not rare things in his times; he ought to have been, as all of us ought to be, better than the age; but I doubt if he was a bad man as things went then. He committed what we can only call crimes, and he had a religiosity of which he was no more ashamed than of the crimes; but I am sure the religiosity was as real and undeniable as the crimes. He could well have been better; without the religiosity I believe he would have been worse. At all events he was not smug; had he been so he could have written no memoirs Mr. Birrell would have admired. Cellini lived in an age that was not smug; it had saints and sinners, and Benvenuto was not one of the saints; he believed in God all the same, and took liberties with Divine patience—else, thought the Rogue, what was it all for, since the saints left it undrawn on? He broke commandments when it suited him, but not on that account would he deny the existence of others that he did not wish to break; still less did he perceive that common logic and decency called for impertinence to the Lawgiver. The modern sinner has a spite against the authority that

makes sins of things he resolves to do: he therefore flings the Old Man of the Woods off his back altogether: but not on that account will he condone your offences should they lie in directions whither his own desires do not tend. Your Agnostic is not hard to shock.





# **A NOVELIST'S SERMONS**



## PARALLELS

IN rhetoric, parallels are a numerous family ; but they are in reality short-lived. The lines soon diverge in one direction, and they run back into mere identity of cause. So that, however interesting a seeming parallel may appear, it is not to be pressed too far. With such limitations in mind it would seem that there might be some interest, and even some use, in considering a parallel between the position of Catholics in England now, and that of Christians in the Roman Empire during the age following that of Constantine.

For a period roughly corresponding the Christian Church before the official conversion of the Empire, and the Catholic Church in England after the Reformation, were much in the same position. During the first three centuries of her history the new religion of Christ in Rome was under a more or less rigorous discipline of repression ; for about three hundred years after the Reformation the old religion of Christ in England existed under analogous, though not identical, conditions of varying but distinct repression.

No one supposes that the Christians of those first three centuries lived in a chronic state of acute persecution ; but their position was always illegal, and from time to time the laws, for longer or shorter intervals tacitly ignored and disregarded, were put in force, and then came outbursts of furious storm. The last of these persecutions occurred during the lifetime of the

Emperor whose official conversion was to secure freedom of worship for the professors of a faith which had existed for a long time under protest, though before he had arrived at his final complete sovereignty and independence.

The Romans were not by disposition a more intolerant people than the English: like the English they were much disposed to regard the religion of which the Pope was the visible head with a somewhat scornful wonder, as an unaccountable weakness and eccentricity in its professors; but they did not all refuse, to those who had the misfortune to be addicted to it, a measure of half-puzzled respect, grounded chiefly on their obvious earnestness and sincerity; nor did they forget that among them were many families of ancient lineage and illustrious name. This latter consideration had perhaps as much weight as the other, for the Romans, whether imperialists or republicans, were at heart a conservative people like the English.

Such unpopularity, on the other hand, as the followers of the Pope laboured under was due in the Roman Empire to much the same causes as have been the ground of it in England. First of all, they were twitted as believers in a foreign cult; and the Romans of the Empire, almost as ready as the English to make much of the wrong foreigners, thought that Romans should be content with the religion of the State. Then the head of this faith, alien in its origin, need not be, and often had not been, a Roman: there had been Hebrew, Greek, Asiatic, and African Popes. The patriotic Roman's national *amour propre* was offended at the notion of subjection, even in spiritual matters, to a pontiff who might be a foreigner: to tell the truth,

he could not grasp the idea of a subjection that concerned only the spiritual world, for that world was beyond the scope of his imagination. His mind was positive and "practical"; he could hardly believe in an invisible kingdom, and suspected there must be more in it than met the ear. When Christ, not disclaiming His kingship, said, "My kingdom is not of this world," Pilate was puzzled, and pressed Him again.

Again, the Roman conception of useful religion was altogether national, whereas the religion of the Pope's spiritual subjects was the reverse of national: its claim to be Catholic, universal, made it international, unpatriotic, and objectionable. To the Roman it appeared obvious that the logic of such a claim was opposed to patriotism, for it suggested an authority higher than the State, outside it, and not subject to it, as it also suggested a sort of confederation, independent of the State, and not even confined to those who were within the vast pale of the Empire. All this made it seem that the Pope and his Christians, even when Romans, must aim at being something else as well. The Roman mind, no more than the English, could grasp the idea of sincere loyalty to the State among people who had to admit that there was a law higher than that of any temporal lawgiver. They did not choose to remember that there had been occasions when Romans, and heathen Romans too, had risen against the lawgiver of the moment, and that those men had ever since been acclaimed as national heroes.

Another count in the indictment was that the faith of those whose supreme representative was the Pope was itself intolerant. Its claim was exclusive; it did not confess that other religions might be as good; it refused to allow its followers to take part in the public

offices of the State religion; regarding such a compliance as treasonable to itself, it was itself regarded as treasonable. It maintained that there could be only one God, and consequently only one Truth, which was surly and discourteous, as the fact was notorious that many gods were publicly recognised, and truth was not commonly supposed to be actually discoverable anywhere. Those of their fellow-citizens who professed this or that cult (many of which cults were as foreign in Rome as Christian Science is in England) had no vehement, much less exclusive, addiction to their own particular form of worship, and were far from laying any surly claim to infallibility in their teachers. Your Mithraite had no objection on seasonable occasions to frequenting the Iseum: the cult of Isis and the cult of Mithra were both tolerated by the State and professed by persons of consideration in society.

What was intolerable in the Pope, and his absurdly subservient followers, was their arrogant, unfriendly claim to a special exclusive possession of truth, resting on a superstitious pretence of a direct, exclusive revelation. This sour attitude showed itself not only in a rigorous abstention from the religious worship of their neighbours, but in a marked shyness to admit to the celebration of their own sacred mysteries those who happened not to revere them, but who would have been quite willing to be present as spectators, out of curiosity. This was superstitious and probably worse. There must be something to conceal, and so the wildest theories flew about to account for it. In such a religion there must be more than appeared on the surface; something discreditable to conceal.

Finally, the fruits of the religion were disagreeable,

and trees are known by their fruit. To start with: the Pope's faith encouraged enthusiasm; it went too far. It was notorious that many Christians of high rank had sold estates, palaces, jewels, statues, heir-looms, and beggared themselves to found churches or to feed the poor. Others had flung up positions of eminence to become priests or monks.

Comparisons were already odious; and this sort of behaviour has always been offensive to those whose own is diametrically opposed to it. "Suppose my daughter should turn Christian," says Tullius, "and become a nun, instead of marrying the wealthy Lucullus!" "Suppose my son," cries Licius, "should get this Christian maggot in his head, and become a priest, like a slave's son, whereas, with his influence and his talents, he might one day be City Prefect! There'd be an end of the glories of a family that was famous three centuries ago, and has been pretty wealthy ever since." Why, the young Licius might turn out a saint, or even a martyr. And in good families saints and martyrs must be as intolerable as sheer vulgarity. To the well-regulated, prosperous Roman mind sanctity and martyrdom must have seemed as tiresome and uneasy as to that of the eighteenth-century Englishman.

The Roman noble of the Empire, whose uncle may have been a Proconsul in Egypt, had heard of the Fathers of the desert, and knew that those enthusiasts never entered a bath, or cut their hair, or ate any reasonable human food. He might himself have seen the martyrdom of this perverse and obstinate Christian or that, and it put him beyond his patience.

Have you ever sat alone, on a windless night, in the Coliseum, and thought of the thoughts of such as sat in your place there seventeen or eighteen hundred years



before you? Of some well-dressed, well-read, well-fed Roman gentleman, of no particular belief himself—easy, tolerant, not ill-natured, nor specially savage, with a confidence that all which is is for the best, placidly patriotic, proud of his country and fond of its customs, with a layman's mild satisfaction in a national religion that never in his life had interfered with him, that had never snatched one pleasure out of his hands, or scolded him, or asked him to confess his decorous sins, or suggested to him that he should be different; a religion with centuries of opulent consideration behind it, splendid in its monuments, satisfactory in its calm, slightly obsolete, ritual; a religion in which he had been born and bred, and his fathers before him, which he loved for that reason rather than for itself—well, well! perhaps he too had *believed* in it once, as an unthinking child open to large impressions; in those unreturning days he had watched the sacrifice, and listened to the half-comprehended words, with a sense that they somehow lifted him, that they were a mysterious link with a touching, greater past. And the huge amphitheatre is filled, the awning is overhead; it is staring afternoon, but the rude sun cannot tease emperor nor court, vestal college, nor all the dignity of Rome, the world's calm mistress.

Then the arena fills too. The athletes are down below: they bend before the supreme figure of earthly rule, "Morituri, Cæsar, te salutant." Not all slaves, nor barbarian captives: yonder a fine Roman face, a graceful Roman form, familiar features of a patrician house identified with a name as old as the Republic.

Why is he here? What brings *him* as food for the lion's mouth? A fancy, an exotic superstition—yet he too dies: no alien, no criminal, no spoil of ruthless

war; and in him his glorious race expires, the fabled name becomes extinct—because he will not drop one sweet grain of incense on the throbbing, pitiful heart of red charcoal before the little ivory or bronze Jove that cares not one whit whether he drop it or no !

Can you not picture the anger of such a Roman gentleman? Ah, the pity of it, the waste! What a faith, that leads its luckless children to such insensate end! How he hates martyrdoms and the religion that has been the prolific mother of martyrs. The very martyrs themselves insult him, and are a sting and a reproach. Cannot a plain man live all his allotted length of days, and covering his head in his toga when the fated hour strikes, bow down aghast, but without vulgar outcry, to the Inexorable Messenger when he comes, without rushing like a fool, midway, to meet him?

Must not such a pleasant gentleman have loathed the religion that led its hapless children along so thorny a path? The faith that knocked aside the sweet, sweet cup of life, carved about with lovely brede of tender flower and laughing faun—the faith that cried: “Poison in the cup. Dash it down!” when the wine within it was so dancing sweet, filling the veins with laughter, and the eyes with lovely images.

Poor kindly gentleman: he saw no one greater than the martyr standing behind him; had never learned the austere tongue that speaks of happiness in pain, glory in shame, a light invisible beyond these chilling mists of falling darkness. With all the sincerity at his conventional command he hated this foreign, unfriendly, tyrannical, agonising faith that flung its loveliest, noblest children to the lion’s mouth.

Half-sick, all angry, when all was over he strolled away to his pleasant, opulent home, or was carried

thither, perhaps not immediately forgetting the tragedy just seen: remembering it, maybe, as he lolled beside his lavish table with wife and son and daughter: they too *might* turn Christian, and for them the shame of the arena, the agony of that horrible death. Let the easy, faulty gods forbid! the old comfortable gods of the old comfortable religion that asked only sacrifices not sacrifice. . . . But these times came to their end at last: after Diocletian's there was no great persecution, only a hurried interlude of it during Julian's short gasp of a reign, when in Rome few martyrs were added to the list.

The old laws against the faith of the Pope's followers had been repealed; the Church had emerged from the catacombs for good, and the churches needed no longer to hide, or half hide, in the basilicas of great Christian houses. Public churches were built everywhere, and they were thronged with worshippers, many of whose names were new among Christians. All the old disabilities were done away with, highest offices in city and army were being filled with Christians: to be Christian was no drawback upon the career of patrician or wealthy aspiring plebeian.

Justice had been done. Let it be done always. *Fiat justitia, ruat coelum*: only if the heavens are falling men need to know where shelter is. Justice was done, as it had to be done, as it is apt to get itself done at long last. So far, good; but not every result of its tardy arrival was particularly good for those on whose behalf it had been done.

For three centuries the faith had existed in all the concentrated vigour of repression; it spread much wider now, but it spread shallower. During those unjust years it had been held by men who knew

that they might have to die for it, who knew that they must suffer for it, paying the lifelong price of social ostracism or isolation, of disabilities in every turn of their worldly fortune; and what cost them dear they valued dearly. Now it cost them nothing; there was nothing to pay for it; and its cheapness cheapened it. Soon indignant doctors of the Church were crying out on the lives of Christians, sometimes for heinous faults, but chiefly because the ways of these new-fashioned Christians were just as the ways of the pagan, or unbelieving, society in which they were finding themselves quite at home. Fashion was their ruin. To live as nearly as possible the same life as that of their non-Christian friends in society, that was their new endeavour; to share exactly their amusements, their indulgences; to be as extravagant, as showy, as profuse, as self-indulgent, as little serious, as little restrained. Pagan faults are not hard for Christians to learn, and according to St. Jerome and St. Ambrose the Christians of tolerating Rome soon learned them. They were in a hurry to repay the toleration they had lately received; for a long time their forefathers' virtues had been out of toleration: their contemporaries' vices they tolerated in a wonderfully short time—and copied. Of course there were saints still; as in every age of the Church there have been and shall be; but sanctity was not popular, and the saints, even those of highest rank and birth, as many were, were out of fashion, and scarcely known in society.

So runs one line of parallel. Need the other be laboured? In hurriedly describing the state of Christians in the Empire during those first three centuries has not the state of Catholics in England

during the three centuries following on the Reformation been described obliquely? Of course, in England, Ireland, and Scotland the persecution was on a less imposing scale. Was it less bitter? Or was the actual repression less rigorous, less complete, or less outrageous in injustice? Were not the grounds of the national aversion from our faith rooted in the same causes, the same ignorance, the same half-blundering, all obstinate prejudices? And was not the result of three centuries of oppression and repression on Catholics themselves alike, if not identical? Here, too, we were a people half-despised, and yet respected by many for qualities which demand and enforce respect. Our Catholic forefathers were intensely in earnest, as well they might be, seeing what their Catholicity cost them. They were not social leaders, were not always polished, lacked public training, were without the education of home universities, were old-fashioned, had sometimes a foreign smack in their manners, led rather obscure lives, and kept closely to themselves. The *patois* of current fashion was not theirs; there were among them many of the very highest rank, with historic names, famous long before anyone had ever heard those of the nobility that came up when the monasteries went down; but even these were rustic, living mostly in their country-houses, not seen, or barely seen, at court: when seen regarded with a picturesque curiosity.

Yet how compact a body they were; with every difficulty in their way how rigidly they held their faith, and how unflinchingly they followed it up in every consequence. Scarcely breathing the common atmosphere, they had their own, and its influence was with them from baptism to death. They were

in many ways unlike other people, and they did not mind. They had to be. It was part of being what they were.

Then came the slow-footed justice, grudgingly and of necessity, not very cheerfully given, not out of breath with haste, nor out of countenance for unpunctuality. She came not out of love but without it, selling herself, elderly courtesan as she was, and, with her price in her hand, wondered that her advent was not more acclaimed. Still she had arrived; and her coming caused many to look into the skies to watch their fall. Of course they did not fall: when clouds break it is not because justice is done, but because injustice has fetched them clattering about our ears. Well, in England we had no catacombs, only slums, and we came out of them. Our churches had been in ambassadors' houses, or those of country lords and squires; now they leapt up in the streets and squares of London and all the towns. And a thousand other good results grew of our new toleration, honest results hard won, and ours by right long before we had them in our hands. No one but a maniac would sigh for the old bad days of shameless repression back again.

Yet those old, shadowed times had compensations that God gave while man's hand was against us. Let us be chary of losing them.

We breathe the common air now: has it no infection? Do we remember, as we used, that after all we live in an atmosphere alien from our faith? That the common opinion about us is founded on the assumptions we have always denied; that every newspaper breathes them, almost every public speech of orators and politicians? That the more we grow like our pleasant neighbours the less we may be resembling Catholics?

Are we learning, is there no danger of our learning, to regard marriage as it is regarded outside the Church? Do we remember that the Sacraments, and not Institutes for this or that, are our way of salvation?

Are we not too eager that our benevolences should be exactly like the philanthropy of those who believe in nothing beyond philanthropy? Half the philanthropy of our time is founded on disbelief in God and the immortality of the soul of man. When "charity" becomes a department of the Modern State, it is mostly because the State has no faith in anything higher than Man. When governments promise to annihilate poverty it is commonly because they have officially annihilated God, Who can alone rob poverty of its sting: not because they love the poor for Christ's sweet sake, the Poor Man of Nazareth, but because they fear them, and recognise in them a danger and a menace. Is not that also like pagan Rome? The poor were fed there too, wholesale: bread and games were flung to them, and did anyone pretend it was for love? The loaves were to stop their mouths, which else might shout too loudly, not to stay their hunger out of any brotherly compassion for the hunger itself.

The conditions of poverty in England after the Reformation were the direct consequence of the Reformation itself, as even such Protestants as William Cobbett could see plainly enough. Before it the poor were the care of the Church, and especially of the religious houses, and their lot was never so pitiable as it became when the monks' charity was changed for the scurvy recognition of the Poor Laws.

To our questions again. Does it strike us that our amusements, too, are provided by those who believe almost nothing that we believe? Millions of people

every year pass hours of their lives in theatres, where the plays they see are the work of writers who have no faith, either in God or God's commandments, certainly none in His Church or her right to guard our conduct as she guards our belief. Millions are reading books, novels, essays, biographies, snippings of history, satires, the enormous majority of which are written by those who have scarcely any conviction so strong as that the Church has always been in the wrong, her teaching an arrogant mediævalism, obsolete and negligible.

We do not go to novels or to poetry to be taught, it may be urged; nevertheless, we are taught by whatever we read, in higher degree or lower. The age just concluded was one of immense literary importance: in poetry, in fiction, in history, in social ethics, in natural science it produced in England a crowd of names so illustrious that we are convinced they are to be immortal. How few of them stood on the side of faith—*our* faith, which we must think of as the only one. Did Thackeray love the Church, or respect her principle? Did Dickens, Meredith, Hardy—or Scott before them? Yet their attitude was respect itself compared with that of Mr. Bernard Shaw and his crowd of imitators to-day; and perhaps Mr. Shaw's plays teach in a week more hearers than his greater predecessors' books taught readers in a month of weeks.

Tennyson was the worthiest of men, and knew it; but he was as Protestant as the parish clerk. Browning thought so many things at a time that it was not easy to decide which thought was actually predominant: but there was always the thought that the Vicar of Christ was an elderly nuisance, and that the best of his nominal children were the rebellious and disobedient.

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His Lyric Love, half-governess, half-bore, was never in two minds about it : to her the Old Man of the Mountains was the Old Man who sat among the Seven Hills beside the yellow river, whence she was inspired to dislodge him with every odd rhyme at her command.

Swinburne was as much irritated by one sort of Christianity as another, and, like Lothaw in Bret Harte's parody, said, "Please, I'd like to be a pagan." We know how Macaulay loved the Church and all her ways, how Froude loved them, and Carlyle, and Motley.

Matthew Arnold disliked Catholicity as much as a brilliant man could ; and Ruskin's attitude to it was that of a travelled old maid who had taken Protestantism with him to Italy in his trunk, and brought it back a good deal creased, distinctly old-fashioned, smelling of camphor, and odd to wear, but by no means discarded. John Stuart Mill had a number of hardish ideas in his capacious intellectual stomach, and a good many of them his successors have spat up again as undigested as ever, but one of them was not that Christendom was a better idea than Europe, and that with the Pope at the head of it a good many things had been better managed.

Of those who taught natural science how many started with any assumption that, whatever might be wrong, God must be right ? Was not the real theory this ? If, when we have done, God can continue to exist, so much the better for Him, but all that's as may be ; the point is quite different. Our business is to erect a universe without Him ; if He can creep in afterwards, well, it will be a satisfaction to our aunts and the rector.

Of course the current point of view, which meets

those who are growing up now, is not precisely identical. The Church's God does *not* exist, but there may be a different person of the same name: the great thing is to remember that he *is* different. He has no rights; he does not know anything, or care about anything. The things he is supposed to have done were done by other people, or more probably were never done at all; his existence, such as it is or ever was, is morbid and subjective. He is only real at all because man made him; and very soon indeed he will cease to be real because man does not want him any longer. His existence then will resemble that of Homer, who never did exist, and whose epics were composed by a number of other people.

Is it not now worth while to remind ourselves that this *is* the atmosphere we are breathing all day long; that, as George Herbert sang with more force than grace, "the fly that feeds on dung is coloured thereby"?

## LOYALISTS AND PATRIOTS

A CATHOLIC may be a good Conservative or Tory, and a Catholic may be a good Liberal or Radical: and we do, in fact, see excellent Catholics in all these political camps. And, undoubtedly, a Catholic may be a most loyal patriot: a good deal of ink has been used to prove, what really needs no proof, the loyalty of Catholics and their patriotism. But it is not to be forgotten that whether Radical or Tory, Republican or Monarchist, a Catholic must be something greater than all or any of these things: and that, however "loyal" he may be, and however "patriotic," there is in him a principle deeper than either what is called loyalty or what is commonly meant by patriotism.

Some false accusations brought against Catholics have their root in a suspected truth, that is, in a fact whose existence is instinctively divined by those who do accuse, but whose significance is misunderstood by them and falsely stated. Patriotism is assumed, by those who arrogate to themselves a monopoly in it, to be a civic virtue so important that he who lacks it must, as a citizen, be worthless and indeed dangerous. But in so far as it is a real virtue at all, it is more than civic, and only one phase or expression of a much wider and more far-reaching virtue, that of Christian charity. It does not consist solely in the love of country: it begins, like charity in the proverb, at home. The forgetfulness of this leads to an inflated

pseudo-patriotism, which is so far unreal that it has no real basis, but hangs in the air, neither linked to heaven or logically supported by earth.

The first step in genuine patriotism must consist in love of family and home, and its first efforts must tend to the true good of home and family: in this each individual of the family must start with himself, not as seeking for himself the *best goods*, but as aiming at his own *best good*: for this does not imply selfishness, but the reverse: the *best goods* are temporary in importance and unnecessary, but the *best good* is of eternal necessity and indispensable: in the attainment of it by each human being consisting the Divine Plan in his regard. Thus each member of the family must aim at his own eternal good, not jostlingly, so as to interfere with the attainment of the same good by every other member of the family, but so as to help every other member to attain it. And, so far is this from *implying* jostling or rivalry that it implies the opposite: as there are only so many temporal "goods" on earth it is true, in theory, that the more one gets the less another can get: but, as the best good is not thus limited, it is not true that the harder I strive for it the less likely is it that you can attain it: on the contrary, every sincere effort of mine must help you.

To the pseudo-patriot this appears nonsense, and your pseudo-patriots are commonly but indifferent members of families, and very unsatisfactory heads of them, as they are commonly far from being exemplary as individuals.

The State, however, consists only of so many families, just as the family itself consists only of so many individuals: and it is because of the frequent neglect of this principle of ours by the State itself that the

State suffers. Euclid tells us that the whole is greater than its part, but no whole can be greater than the sum total of its parts, and no whole can be better than the parts of which it consists.

If the members of a family are severally rotten, the family will be rotten; if the families in a State are rotten, the State can be no better. The priest who tries to make each individual in his charge better is a finer patriot than the doctrinaire politician who vapours about the good of the State, neglecting his own, and that of his family. There is no such thing as the good of the State apart from the good of all the individuals in it.

After the family come groups of families; hamlets, villages, towns, cities, counties, provinces; and people can be, and have been, furiously "patriotic" about these; the patriotism of the Greeks mostly confined itself to what would seem to us very narrow limits. In much later times patriotism in Italy was much more of this sort than of that which concerns a whole "country" in the English sense of the word. In Italy a man speaks of his village as his *paese*, his country, and he means it; not merely that *paese* is Italian for village, which it is not. A Florentine or a Pisan was, and largely is, "patriotic" for Florence or Pisa, and only in a much cooler degree for Italy: a Roman had, and has, the same feeling; only in him it had not the same twang of localism, because he felt that Rome was the Metropolis of the world; to think of it as the capital of Italy was not an enlargement of his conception but a stunting of it and a narrowing. Until recently, however, Italy was not, even politically, one country; and at present it is only so politically and in theory. Whereas Spain, France, England, Ireland,

Scotland, Wales, have for many centuries been each a country single in itself, though some of them are joined together politically. In these countries, therefore, the notion of patriotism has been less local, and wider, and also less compact and intense.

In this broader sense true patriotism is still only a part, and an expression, of the Christian rule of charity, viz. the obligation of loving; less easy, perhaps, because less intimate and more theoretical. The members of our family we *see*, even the members of our native town or village we know, or may know, by sight; but we cannot have personal knowledge of all our compatriots, or personal relations with them; the charities of daily life are not called into play in their regard, so that to some extent we are endeavouring to love an idea.

To love is, none the less, the real duty of patriotism, whereas, in the mouths of many of its noisiest professors, the point would rather seem to be to hate. It is not, with them, so much a question of loving their country as of disliking, envying, or despising other countries. Such others as appear to claim the dignity of rivals they vilify and slander; the rest they ignore as beneath notice. This patriotism would seem to be composed largely of vanity and largely of spite. The vanity is not hard to understand, for your patriot of this kidney has often little in himself on which to ground that pleasant sensation, and brags of the greatness (*i.e.* bigness) of his country to blind the public to his own littleness.

Beyond the idea of country this sort of patriotism can, obviously, not reach. It could not occur to these patriots that the virtue of which patriotism is a part has a further scope still; that, just as every in-

dividual is a unit in the family, and every family a unit in the State, so the State itself is only a larger, less interesting, though more important, unit in the final unit of the human family of which God is the Head.

As things now stand, probably the Catholic Church alone maintains this wide view. In the despised Middle Ages it was of general acceptance, because when the huge, but artificial and material, unity of the Roman Empire disappeared, it was succeeded by the vaster and unmaterial unity of the Church. The split-up of this union, whereby a single Christendom was changed into a divided Europe, did not take effect till the Reformation, which substituted for the splendid and noble idea of a universal Christian family, united under one father, the petty and selfish idea of rival nationalities under a group of mutually suspicious stepbrothers, and the makeshift compromise of a balance of power, which none of those in the balances would agree to in his own case.

The Catholic Church must have the broader idea of patriotism, and always have it, because she *is* Catholic. The Hebrew Church treasured the truth of One only God as the family secret of one nation: the Catholic Church proclaims all truth as the equal birthright of all mankind, and refuses to house herself in any one nation, or call herself by the name of any one country. Countries arise upon the world's great stage, and play their parts, and go: empires fatten, fall apoplectic, and expire, like the empires whose heirs they are: the Church cannot bind herself to what is mortal and has its allotted death as surely as it had its appointed birth. So she sits, not coldly outside the nations, but serenely above them, gathering them into her arms, if they will

come, yet never isolated by the bounds, or by the "interests" of any one of them.

This the world divines, by an instinct so unwelcome that it harbours it as a suspicion and an accusation, and broods over it as a grudge. The instinct is a true, involuntary, intuition: the statement of the suspicion a slander, and the grudge envious and malicious. The Church has always been higher than the world: and a sense of inferiority will ever make the mean spiteful.

"A Catholic cannot be a genuine patriot." The accusation means that every genuine Catholic must be something more than a mere "patriot"—because the boundaries of the largest empire cannot bind his patriotism, or forbid its range "as far as God has any land."

Was there ever a finer patriot than St. Gregory the Great, or a more papal Pope? He did more, not only for the part of it he actually governed, but for all Italy, than any man of his age; but he was never a mere Italian. The nations were his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession. Thus his eye could range, far beyond the bounds of his own loved and lovely land, to the fog-girt island lonely in the cold seas of the north, that had been Christian Britain once and was heathen England then, and become its apostle, though his own place must be still by Peter's tomb.

There may have been instances, enough and to spare, of Catholics whose patriotism has been of the narrower sort, and who have vaunted themselves of it—because there have always been Catholics whose Catholicity has been skin-deep, and because it is the perverse tendency of man to value himself on the wrong things. Our own trivial achievements and personal, private dis-



inctions are apt to strike us more than what is greatest in us, because what is greatest is common and not confined to ourselves. The greatest thing about every Catholic is that he is one; but, the smaller he is in himself, the likelier is it that he will pride himself on some small thing he has to himself or shares with but few besides. The greater he is in himself the more will he think of that which he has in common with everyone of his faith.

"After all," said St. Theresa, dying, "I am a child of the Church." It was not that she chafed at

"The petty done, the undone vast."

God has plenty of time to do all His work: His greatest helpers have not vexed themselves with the little they have had time to carry out in their own day and their own way. Nor do I believe it was because she despised her own work: she was too reverent; it was all His, and she could no more belittle it than St. Paul would slur over what God had wrought, with him for tool and labourer of a day. But in the hour of death it is comfort we need, and she found it, as we all must at last, saints and sinners, not in what she had done for Him, but in what He had done for her: in what He is, not in what she was. "After all, O Lord, I am a child of the Church."

Then, loyalty. Oh, frequent word! Oh, rare virtue! Must not that also begin at home, and the loyal man be first of all loyal to himself?

"Ah, Liberty!" cried Madame Roland, lifting her eyes to its image before laying her head upon the block—"Ah, Liberty! the things that are done in thy name."

And how queer excursions loyalty has taken: what

cheap proofs of itself it offers. Out of loyalty King Charles's subjects levied war against him and removed his head, lest a royal tongue should go on telling lies. Your rebel of to-day is your loyalist of to-morrow. Who was the loyalist when that Charles's namesake and great-grandson, and the butcher Cumberland, fought at Culloden? which commanded rebels? Did it not all depend on the issue of a battle? If the Prince of Wales had won then, as well as at Preston-pans, and the Elector had gone off to Hanover, as he was ready to go, I suppose the victorious troops would have been the loyalists, and those who had been trying to keep King James III out of his throne and dominions would have been allowed by history to be the rebels. In our own days loyalty often consists, like gratitude, in a lively apprehension of favours to come: in an eager resolve to be about a court, if possible, to be a guest of royalty, and to bask in princely smiles. How anæmic such loyalty grows when courtly doors remain shut, and royal invitations are not forthcoming. It by no means thrives when it has to be its own reward.

But there is a Catholic notion of loyalty, too: which is a virtue, as is patriotism, and, like it, is part of another virtue: for, just as true patriotism is not national vanity, but a phase of Christian love: so loyalty is not a lick-spittle servility, or a self-seeking sycophancy, but a part of the great law of sincere obedience.

And this we owe to many, "to the king as excelling," but to many beneath him, and to some above him. The holy spirit of discipline flees from the ungodly, and it is not so easy for the ungodly to be loyal as they think.

Here, again, the Catholic is unjustly suspect because

of a true intuition falsely stated. It is perceived that in the Catholic idea there is something higher than any temporal sovereignty, and thence it is concluded that the Catholic cannot be a thoroughly loyal subject of any earthly prince or ruler. So far as this means anything it means that there is, for the Catholic, a court of higher appeal. Has not non-Catholic loyalty always presupposed one? Else why were your Hampdens patriots, and not mere rebels? How can those who sent James II packing be absolved?

However men may prate when "loyal" prattle serves a turn, has it not always been recognised outside the Church that loyalty has its breaking-point? And have not they who, when that point has been supposed to be reached, flung loyalty aside, been most loudly acclaimed in loyal England? When the subjects of every Italian State but one threw off their loyalty to their sovereigns, whither did they turn for surest praise and blindest applause, but to loyal England? not to Radical English, nay, nor Liberal English, but to Tory England, good, solid, constitutional England. If anywhere in Europe Portugal found flatterers and sympathisers when she drove her King away, it was in loyal England.

And why? Because to the non-Catholic English mind loyalty is rather a personal sentiment than a logical principle bound up in religion. As a whole the British nation has a strong, personal attachment not so much to the Crown as to the monarch who wears it. But, lacking imagination, and being personally indifferent to monarchs of other countries, it is not personally interested in their vicissitudes, nor deeply moved by their misfortunes.

This sort of personal loyalty is very well: but it is

not the highest, or safest conceivable. The loyalty taught by St. Paul had Nero for its object. That Emperor's personal claim could hardly have been less; but it did not affect the Apostle's principle. Loyalty based on religion and the duty of obedience is apt to be really more weather-proof than that which in fact depends chiefly on the popular or excellent qualities of the sovereign: since the best sovereign cannot guarantee the perpetual excellence of his successors.

That genuine loyalty is bound up with the principle of authority those in authority have persistently ignored; and so they themselves have often assailed the principle, while promising themselves that the loyalty they desired in their own case would be still forthcoming after its foundation had been destroyed by themselves.

There have been no more wanton assailants than kings and heads of States of the authority of the Sovereign Pontiffs. Now it was one, now it was another; kings of France, kings of Naples, Venetian oligarchs or doges, Florentine magnificos and grand dukes, Spanish monarchs and Austrian, all have taken their turn of sowing the windy seed of opposition to authority in its supreme seat on earth, and all have reaped, or are reaping, their own predestined whirlwind. The real root of modern revolutions lies farther back than the pretexts advanced in explanation of them: the principles which produced the Reformation produced also the excesses of the French Revolution. Peoples who had been taught the nobility of dethroning God's Vicegerent were not likely to leave earthly rulers enthroned.

The Church's theory is that all authority, her own included, is from above: the Reformation theory is

that all authority, including that of all Churches, is from below, *i.e.*, from the people who comprise them. In England the King was declared supreme head of the Church as well as of the State: and, whatever he may have chosen to think himself, that declaration was the first step in the destruction of his own position. The monarch in question happened to be a tyrant, and the concession to him of his new claim to supremacy in spiritual affairs gave him the appearance of more complete absolutism: but the appearance was delusive—for the concession implied powers in Parliament that no Parliament had ever before dreamed of. It was Parliament that made Henry VIII head of the Church, and because it so acted, out of timidity and subservience, the King's autocracy seemed more assured. But the mere acceptance of such a grant from Parliament recognised in Parliament powers that would inevitably be used again for widely different purposes. Parliaments that had been taught to set aside the primitive authority of the Pope would presently realise their power to set aside the authority of the King—an authority by no means primitive, and resting on a much more recent prescription.

Henry, clever as he thought himself, did a stupid thing for the continued solidity of his own throne when he made his Parliament pretend to believe it had the right to overturn the throne of the Fisherman.

Time and again the kings of France set up the Gallican liberties against the authority of Peter, and the Eldest Son of the Church was as blindly stupid in doing so as was the Defender of the Faith. For the Catholic Church is the citadel of authority, and every success, or seeming success, gained against her

outworks sapped the foundations of an authority that could never have so much to say for itself.

Wise monarchs have all perceived that "religion is good for the people," by which they mostly mean that religion among their people is good for themselves: but they have not been equally clear-sighted in recognising that the basis of religion is a ticklish matter to play with: that if the people are taught that the only authority for the Church rests in their own will, they will not be constrained by any church to what is not agreeable to themselves. No man will obey orders coming from a quarter subservient to himself, except so far as those orders embody his own wishes.

No Church whose authority is derived from the State can expect to rule the members of the State even in spiritual matters. It can only offer suggestions: and its suggestions will only be taken in good part by those who happen to approve them, that is, in general, by those to whom they are superfluous.

A preacher or a prelate may, in such a church, possess an accidental weight or influence, but it can be only that of his own eloquence or of his own personality: he will only speak for himself. The moment he attempts more, the instant he tries to teach with authority of mission, he will be asked: "Who told you so? By whom are you commissioned?"

## TIME'S REPRISALS

IN a very interesting paper, that appeared some ten or a dozen years ago in the *Cornhill Magazine*, it was remarked that Christian Science is so-called for reasons that remind us of the name of the guinea-pig, which is not a pig and neither comes from Guinea nor costs twenty-one shillings: so the religion invented by Mrs. Eddy is not a science, and has nothing to do with Christianity.

If it were scientific it would have fewer followers, and its remoteness from Christianity may account for its having so many. The "religionists" of the present time seem intuitively aware that novelty is their only chance, and, so far from standing on the old ways, their most feverish aim is to strike out paths that may at least appear original. Even those who hoped to work inside the Catholic Church, and would have worked but for their detection, had the same object; an object, one may observe, totally different from that professed by heresiarchs of a less irritable age. The pretence of most, if not all, Protestant reformers whose reformation (unlike proverbial charity) never troubled itself to begin at home, was that of an appeal to primitive Christianity. The pretence was false, and only passed for true among the ignorant, who knew as little about primitive Christianity as they cared for the real reformation of the Christianity of their own day: but the appeal was respectable in form, however it may

have been insincere in fact. Even Döllinger, much nearer the present day, was willing to condone the rebellion of the "Old Catholics" by admitting the name as if in the fond hope that the Universal Church and its Head might thus be made to appear as consisting of New Catholics, who had in some way wandered into novelty, and by such wandering lost just claim to be Catholics at all.

Whether Döllinger's erudition saved him from, in his secret heart, lapsing into heresy may be doubted, and it certainly did not save him from falling into schism; but he was not at any rate shallow enough to sink into the bathos of Modernism.

A learned priest who suffers himself to succumb to a determination of self to the brain, and refuses to submit to the Voice of Christ speaking through His earthly Vicegerent, can no longer care as much for Christ as he cares for his own vanity; but it may be surmised that Döllinger would have cared enough for Christianity to have been sincerely disgusted by the Modernists, had their voice been audible in his day. Obstinate as he was, and self-satisfied as he was, he was too clear-sighted not to have known that Modernism is merely an attempt to explain away Christianity in such a fashion as to make it palatable to those who dislike Christianity. With all his fatal faults he was not puzzle-headed: and he knew well enough that black and white can never be interchanged: the whitening of black can only result in a dirty or obscure grey.

The pretext of Modernism and its congeners is that the gate of truth should be made wide, so as to admit those whose mental conformation renders entrance by a narrow door difficult. But it does not seem to strike

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them that there is a breadth which can only find admission by a total razing of walls. After all, the building is of more moment than any gate of it: and when all the sides shall have vanished, and the roof have been taken off (to admit the tallest figures), and the foundations tampered with—as unnecessary when the weight of the superstructure has been correspondingly reduced—there is not much building left.

Modernism affects to be an intra-mural affair, and as such it concerns us. But there are, in fact, Modernists who are proud to be outside.

The vitality of truth is so innate and so robust, that even the retention of some vestiges of it acts as a pickle or preservative, though vestiges alone can no more keep permanently alive a body that retains only such extracts of truth than salt can make the liveliest pig, once deceased, anything but bacon. Thus, certain of the Reformed Churches at the time of their suicide, which was that of their nominal birth, retained, or tried to retain, so much at least of Christianity as served to stave off their predestined end. The first step of their life was a step towards their inevitable grave: the first muling and puking of their infancy had already the choke of a death-rattle in it, but the agony was to be long—as I think, for the reason at which I have hinted.

English Protestantism professed to hold fast much of the integral faith of that Church from which it shook itself free: it flung away five out of seven sacraments, but loudly affirmed that it kept the two best; it turned from God's mother, but did not openly assail the Divinity of her Son; it fell into infinite revolt against Christ's Vicar, but it did not dare to explain away either Himself, His virginal birth, or His Resurrection.

On such isolated scraps of truth as it clutched at it lived on, though marked with the fatal blain of plague and inexorable death.

But who that says to the black waters of untruth "thus far and no further" is ever heeded? I never heard that Canute was a theologian, but he knew better than that. The rising tide respects no throne that sets itself upon the fickle sandy shore. Henry VIII was a theologian, his title of Defender of the Faith is a livid mark upon his wretched forehead now: he was no Protestant: he knew all about that, as the devil does: his son was knock-kneed Protestant enough: and his virginal daughter was a bad woman, but not a bad Catholic like her wicked father; none of the precious triad aimed at flinging the Scriptures to the swine, though they snatched them out of the hands of the Church that had kept them for the world through all the "darkness of the dark ages"; Henry would not have them jangled by clowns in every ale-shop: his reformers, whose aims were widely different from his own, had no objection to such jangling, but they at least made much of the Scriptures. It was their pretence that the Church was at issue with the Bible, and they preferred the Bible, setting it upon a pillar in the midst of their tabernacles, as about the only sacred thing worth retaining. Their pretence was singularly foolish, as it was necessarily insincere: for, if the Bible was the one thing of which the Church was afraid, the arch-enemy of her claims, and the obvious antidote to her doctrine, how unaccountable that she, with all the guile wherewith they credited her, and she alone, should have treasured it down the ages and kept it intact for posterity.

Where would the Scriptures be but for her and her

monks? How easy a thing it would have been, during those ages, that the last three or four centuries love to call dark, for the Church to have smothered the Bible altogether, when there was no learning anywhere but hers, and all letters were her monopoly. In the slow irony of fate it is odd to note that it is at the hands of Protestant sectaries that the Scriptures have met with assault, and that now the Church that guarded them for the modern world is the sole and unflinching champion of their integrity. The descendants of Luther have striven to boil them down to a gelatinous pudding, innutritious as it is flabby.

When England started on her eccentric orbit of independence, in defiance of the central sun of Christianity, she seemed resolved to hold sacred two things in memory of her former religion; the Bible and the observance of Sunday. Her attitude to both may have been marked by the exaggeration of superstition; the Bible she seemed to imagine had dropped down from heaven, in English, with gilt edges, straight into the lap of James I; and her Sunday might seem more connected with Moses than with Christ. Still she did revere both, and held them as sacred things which man's petulance or self-indulgence was not to tamper with. All that has changed, and with a change so rapid that one need not be old to be able to note its strides. Forty years ago almost every English man or woman who could read, and hundreds of thousands who could not, would instantly recognise any quotation, though it were only that of a phrase, from the Bible; and for the simple reason that those who could read did read the Bible, and those who could not went habitually to church. It is quite different now. Both habits have fallen into disuse, and both are falling

yearly into a disuse more complete. You may borrow a phrase, or an illustration, from the Scriptures and they will admire your originality, and wonder at the vigorous force of your ideas, without a suspicion that you are borrowing from the wisdom whence Solomon's was borrowed.

Again; even dignitaries of the Anglican Church are heard smoothly explaining away such central doctrines of Christianity as their forbears would have been furious at the idea of abandoning as monopolies to the Catholic Church, *e.g.* the Virginal Birth of Christ, and the fact of His Resurrection. Old Protestants had an odd leaning to St. Paul—because, I suppose, he was not St. Peter—what would they have thought had they foreseen that a day would come when their descendants would forget how their beloved Apostle of the Gentiles cried aloud: “If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain . . . if Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

The various Christian sects which are spoken of collectively in England as Nonconformists, descend from founders even more exclusively devoted to the Scriptures than were the founders of the Anglican Establishment. The latter made almost everything of the Bible, the former made quite everything; they, for the most part, cared as little for two sacraments as for seven; they wanted no sacraments, and they wanted no dogma, no “articles,” no liturgy, no holy orders; the Bible was to be the one and sole ark of their salvation, and it required no interpretation, for

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it interprets itself; the plainest and most literal sense of every line of it was to be accepted, and to do their business, without priest or paraphrase. This attitude is now being hurriedly abandoned, and a new fashion has sprung up. It is among the younger—and, of course, the wiser—members of the Nonconformist ministry that the New Criticism has received its most effusive welcome in England. Having bolted it themselves they make haste to illustrate their acceptance of it in the pulpit, for the farther they recede from the venerable delusion that every word of Scripture was a word of God, the more complacently assured are they of possessing the brightest illumination in the most brilliant of all ages. But it is the simple fact that the Nonconformist laity is for the most part scandalised and astounded at the rationalistic treatment of the Bible to which they are being forced to listen in their meeting-houses. This, then, is how the Protestant boast of the Bible is ending.

The system, and group of systems, that professed to need it and nothing else but it, only uses it now to turn all its substance into shadow, or neglects it altogether more and more completely. The religions which cared for nothing but "faith" are hurriedly stripping themselves of all that is the objective of faith, by flinging from themselves all that is supernatural. It is they, not the Catholic Church (hereditary foe of the Scriptures, as they would make her out), that would melt the Old Testament and the New down into graceful allegories, and would thus leave of God nothing but a Name, and of Christ nothing but an Idea.

Thus has boasted faith subsided to a loose surmise; thus has a tough revolt rotted down into a vague

anarchy: thus has such windlestraw of truth as the ruinous blast of the Reformation left to the reformed come to be trodden and trampled into sodden slush of silly conjecture and sheer untruth.

Again, the English Sunday is, year by year, losing more and more of its character of sacredness: for the English are rapidly ceasing to go to church, and an Englishman is the last man on earth to do nothing at all—he amuses his Sunday. On Good Friday he used only to plant his potatoes; now he cycles off somewhere to pass a jocund day watching somebody else play football, or listen to the negro-minstrels on the shore, till the merry afternoon lapses into the noisy night.

On Sunday also he goes somewhere—anywhere you like, so it be not to church. Nor is this a merely vulgar habit confined to the hard-worked, who has such excuse for stealing an idle day as six days of bustling toil may suggest to him. His “betters” set him the example. It is their day to scour the country in their motor-cars; their day for distant visits; and more and more their special day for hospitality; though for such purpose the day may begin, like a Jewish sabbath, which it resembles in naught else, about the sunset of the day before. There are thousands of fashionable houses that open no hospitable doors except on Sunday, or from Saturday to Monday; and, though hospitality is not servile work, it involves it, and usually involves the impossibility for a servant of attending any place of worship. In England, nowadays, many a Catholic servant will tell you: “On Sunday I cannot go to Mass. It is our busy day. On Saturday company comes down: on Sunday morning there is a big breakfast to send up, or twenty breakfasts to different

rooms. Then luncheons to get ready, then ever so many to tea; then a dinner party. There's not a chance of Mass or Benediction." And the heads of such households may be Catholics themselves, who save their conscience by eschewing Catholic servants when they can, or choosing foreigners who, if Catholic, they assure themselves, are less fidgety about Mass every Sunday.

For there are all sorts of Liberal Catholics: not only such as are "liberal" in belief, but such as confine their liberality to easiness in observance of ecclesiastical laws.

A Liberal Catholic is also like a guinea-pig: for liberality consists in an open-handed readiness to part with what is *our own*; and neither the Church's faith nor the Church's rule is his to give away: so that he is not, after all, particularly liberal, nor is he apt to remain in any true sense Catholic. Catholicity is so delicately compact together that he who light-heartedly surrenders a bit of what he thinks mere fringe presently finds that the whole garment is gone, and he is left in the mere nakedness of non-belief. Ask any priest who has laboured long in England, and he will tell you that he himself knows of whole families once Catholic, who have slipped out of the Church by nothing else than the sheer neglect of Sunday Mass.

That way out into the night calls for no deliberation; still less does it imply what are called intellectual difficulties. It is open to the idlest and least thoughtful. Not that I would for a moment seem to suggest that the intellectual difficulties themselves usually assail the most intelligent. Such difficulties are mostly of the shallowest quality, of the flimsiest texture.

Even Catholics themselves are far too much apt to yield, to such as affect them, a fantastic respect to which they have no claim whatever.

"Poor father! No, he isn't a Catholic," the devout Catholic child of a mixed marriage will tell you. "He doesn't believe in anything. He is very clever, you see, and he doesn't believe in any religion. Perhaps you will pray for him." And such a dull ignoramus as he is! His reasons for unbelief, God save the mark! Why, the simplest and most unquestioning believer could suggest to him a dozen difficulties more respectable than his.

Show me an "atheist" or an "agnostic," and in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand I will show you a green goose, if you want such vulgar, greasy, unfledged, indigestible bird.

God is a judge strong and patient, and He is provoked every day; we, who are neither patient nor strong, are provoked daily by the meek concession of believers that the unbelievers are too deep for what St. Thomas Aquinas not only believed but knew that reason insisted on his believing. The great majority of those who profess to be unable to believe are taken too seriously. They are encouraged to regard themselves as terrible creatures, gloomy, tragic familiars of Satan, when they are only his jack-in-the-boxes and tin whistles. Such figures of fun as they are intellectually are best reformed by the laughter their oddity suggests.

However, as we have said already, Liberal Catholicism consists more commonly in "liberal" practice than in "liberal" theory; and it is not the less fatal on that account, for its example is the more contagious, and its result equally effectual; the chimney-sweep next door



who can see for himself that you never go to Mass, and that the butcher calls punctually every Friday morning, is as likely to be injured by your example as if he heard it mentioned that your views concerning the hypostases were grievously unsound; and perhaps those views of yours might themselves fade into a just significance if you would leave them alone, and betake yourself to Mass—eschewing chops on Friday. Besides, the Liberal Catholicism which follows on careless practice is more fatally easy to fall into. It requires uncommon little thought to become a doubter—it requires none at all to become a defaulter in the matter of religious obligations; a man may have very hazy notions on which to ground liberal beliefs (or hesitation to believe), but the clearest possible perception that it is more trouble to go to Mass than to stay away.

Self-indulgence is the real root of what we may call Easy Catholicism, and it leads to the final loss of faith much more commonly and much more simply than the intellectual alertness and spirit of inquiry which are supposed to suggest “difficulties.”

## CAUSE AND CURE

IN the second of these papers I took occasion to speak of the fact that Catholics, whether calling themselves, or called by their neighbours, by this or that political or party name, must always have in themselves something deeper and more permanent than their adhesion to any political party. For the interests of parties are shifting and evanescent, while the principles of the Church are stable and unchanging. It may and does happen that some matter of importance ranges almost the whole Catholic vote in a country for the moment on the side of a Liberal Government; and some other question presently arises, even in the same country, which ranges all the Catholics in it on the opposite side—the Conservative Government, or Opposition, happening to favour what the Catholics desire, or the Liberal Cabinet, or Opposition, chancing to be bent on some measure repugnant to what Catholic principles demand. It can hardly ever be said with safety, at any given moment, that the whole Catholic world is Liberal in politics, or Conservative.

This sort of apparent uncertainty is not an element of weakness, but the reverse, even politically speaking; for it is not a secret that more deference is paid by party rulers to bodies of voters whose vote has to be conciliated than to groups whose adhesion can be securely counted upon without any conciliation at all. Catholics therefore act wisely when they teach party

rulers to understand that their support can only be gained by conduct in consonance with the unchanging principles and permanent interests of their unchanging Church. Politicians may resent the rigidity of this Catholic attitude—resent it because it may be hampering for the moment to themselves—but even politicians are apt to recognise conscience in others, though not invariably exclusively dominated by it themselves; and the more consistent Catholics are the more they are respected. Strict Catholics may hear themselves accused of bigotry, intolerance, or stiff-neckedness, but lax Catholics are not deeply venerated even by Protestants or unbelievers. The Holy See itself is often reviled for its stiffness and unyielding immovability; but in its stiffness lies its strength. As a temporal sovereignty it does not for the moment exist, whatever may happen next; yet it is as much as ever a World-Power; and its significance as such comes from the well-appreciated fact of its solidity and moral force. Were it to study chiefly pliancy and adaptability to the times, hurriedly grabbing at new methods and novel catchwords, hastily admitting every freshly-discovered social, political, or ethical nostrum, its moral force would no longer impress the times, of which it would become the pupil instead of the teacher. “Après moi le deluge,” said Louis XIV, and the modern world is given to call the Holy See antediluvian, as in a sense it is. It was there before all the deluges out of which modern society is blankly trying to pick itself together, and it will be there to the end, after all the further deluges to which modern society may be helplessly drifting. Meanwhile politics and parties are here; and what I would like to say is this—too much cannot be hoped from them, or any of them.

It seems to be admitted almost everywhere that society, that is, the present artificial fabric of society, is sick and sorry. One party ascribes the mischief to the stupidity, greed, selfishness, and obstinacy of its opponents; and those opponents blame the rashness, imprudence, and ignorance of the experimentalists, whose haste and itching ambition for present applause lead them into devious and thorny paths whose final exit no one can foresee without misgiving. Whether either side really believes that if it could remain always in power the wounds of society would be healed, we cannot tell. But, whatever they may believe, we cannot believe it. The wounds of society lie deeper than that: and they never will be healed by any merely political physicians. We have heard of Symptomatic Treatment, and we are informed that it is not only superficial, but false in principle, beginning, as it were, at the wrong end: beginning, that is, from the outside. Whereas true healing can be wrought, not by chasing local symptoms about the sick body, but only by finding out the cause of disease and removing it.

To say that all merely political attempts to heal the sickness of society will in the long run prove superficial, a radically vicious course of cure, because amounting to no more than symptomatic treatment, may sound gloomy and pessimistic: nevertheless I believe it to be the sad, if dismal, truth. "Are we, then, to do nothing? to let everything drift, and make no attempt at relief?" the political physician may, quite plausibly, demand. The answer is trite and dull: "Medice cura teipsum." A sick doctor may, as the phrase goes, save your life. But if the doctor's own disease lies not in his body but in his mind: if all his principle of healing be at fault—then what good will all his

diplomas do you? All the letters after his name will not spell health for you. That is what's the matter. The political physician is making a partial, incomplete, superficial diagnosis all the time.

Certain crude symptoms he may attack—and in attacking them he does bring temporary relief, if his method of attack be not clumsy and ignorant; but his method may be both, and even the irritating local trouble may be driven to another part, and reappear there with greater suffering to the whole body, or forced inward to some vital spot where it works unseen to its fatal climax. Meanwhile he earns applause and gratitude: good doctors know well how popular a quack may be for a time. "Wait," they, like Mr. Asquith, say, "and see." All this onslaught upon local symptoms will avail nothing to radical cure, till the radical disease is frankly confessed, and, if not too late, removed.

God made the world, and all men in it: all they have is His, and all their good comes from Him. All their ill is of their own making: and yet they cannot mend it by themselves. Only He who created can recreate. Men can make themselves sick, but perfect health can come back only at the word of the one Divine Physician, and by obedience to that word. The pool is troubled every day, but only when He comes by is the man healed eight-and-thirty years sick of his infirmity. Then no scrambling haste brings back health, but one act of unhalting obedience to one word of omnipotent command: "Arise, take up thy bed and walk."

The evils which afflict society are traced by many different observers to many different causes: but the underlying cause of all those causes themselves is one—selfishness, a selfishness deep-rooted and not planted

in one soil alone. There is the selfishness of capital, the selfishness of labour, the selfishness of some who cling desperately to vested interests being fiercely torn from them, and the selfishness of others who can see no betterment for themselves except in the dragging down and worsening of the position of such as seem to have already that which they are in hot haste to get. Will any State ever be able to root out selfishness? Can any State's legislation ever change it into brotherly love and sympathy? Legislation can make anything the State chooses criminal: it can punish privilege, and destroy it: it can set a class up, and it can tear a class down; it can drive capital away into another State, and it can also drive labour away into some other State where employment for labour is to be found. It can make inequalities illegal, and it can try to make equality obligatory. Can it succeed? Has it ever succeeded anywhere?

Any government that is wanton enough to do so can pit class against class—no government can insist on each class loving the others. The business of the Church is to try; not by sledge-hammer legislation, but by teaching what the Founder gave her charge to teach. God alone can do what needs to be done, and the States of the world are in a conspiracy to ignore God, and so cause Him to be ignored. That is what's the matter.

Selfishness is inevitable in men who have ceased to believe in God, whatever altruism may urge or pretend. A man will not yield his own profit, or even his own pleasure, once he believes that he himself is the being of paramount importance. There is no radical cure for selfishness except the sincere belief and recognition that there is something greater than self: and that belief and recognition the States of the

world have for some time been sedulously smothering. Man has never admitted any greater than himself except God; set God aside, and he sees nothing but himself. You may prate of mankind, and the greatest good of the greatest number, but his greatest good, once he disbelieves in God, is the good of "number one"—for that intensely significant minority he will care more than for all the majorities that ever turned any minister's brain. What is the greatest good of the greatest number to a man discontented with the little share of good he sees himself to have in a world which he believes to be the only world? The mere reduction of the general bulk of suffering will not make him patient, though the sufferers be made few, so long as he suffers anything himself. Can any State by any legislation make pain and sorrow, poverty and suffering and discontent, illegal? Can any legislation breed patience, or set undaunted hope in the hopeless? Can any State secure ease and comfort to the idle, the incapable, the deficient, the improvident, the foolish? It may try, and in trying it may deal great injustice to the industrious, the capable, the provident, and the prudent: even so it cannot succeed. There are obstinacies of ineptitude that will always defeat the most grandmotherly legislation. Or States may bluntly ignore such helpless, hopeless minorities, and leave them to the tender mercies of the law of survival of the fittest. Such minorities are helped on suffering; weak and feeble minorities do not count on a division. God only has patience for cognizance of minorities that are not noisy.

Radical wounds of society come from radical faults in the men of whom society is composed, and the State is not concerned to heal those faults. At all events

the State does not concern herself with healing them, for they come from a deeper root than social inequalities, huge accumulations of wealth and horrible, staring contrasts of squalor and poverty; they are bred in the swamps of unbelief. They are the rank growth of the cold, wet, and sour lands of low-lying denial of all that is above this present life. Hope is the only balm for present pain, and of all men must they be most hopeless who have been allowed to grow up believing that Christ is not risen from the dead, and that death is the bitter end of all. Hopelessness of aught beyond this life must lead to greediness while this life lasts, and greed unfed must lead to despair and fury. Why should the hopeless poor be patient? Why should the hopeless rich loosen his clutch upon his wealth? Life is so short: the most outrageous millions can be so guarded as to last a lifetime or two; the most hopeless poverty must make haste to seize what it can, no matter whence, no matter how, else it will be too late, and death come and find it empty-handed still—since death ends all.

God's lessons are the follies of States. His justice is their laughing-stock, His adjustment their fables. Material good is the only good, and material good they promise, break their promises, and invent new ones. The promises of States that persist in ignoring God, and prove their persistence by eliminating altogether when they can—as far as possible when total elimination does not yet seem feasible—the teaching of belief in God, the promises of such States, I say, are all based on the theory that the State has everything to bestow and God nothing, that the only things man can need or desire are the things a government can give: in other words, that this life and its profits are all there is

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to hope for. Under such teaching majorities must be progressively formidable, for the majority of men will always perceive that there are still *desiderabilia* in other people's possession: the logic of unbelief leads to hungry greed and furious discontent, and so to anarchy, for human law alone can never abolish unbridled wants, nor muzzle the mouth of majorities unsatisfied. Anarchy is only the final consequence of negation of God, and to it the public negation, or ignoring of God, inevitably tends. Should the weakening of government, which seems to exist in many States, become general, and pass on to a phase of chaos, those who may rejoice in it, the triumphant anarchists, may justly boast that the Reformation was the first phase; that the intervening condition of things was a mere temporary compromise, a futile endeavour to fire a train without any consequent explosion—an attempt to set in operation certain potent causes and prevent the causes producing the result involved in them.

From the teaching of the Reformation arrived, in due time, the idea of States without God; and nothing would have seemed more ludicrous to the "positive" eighteenth century than the dictum that a State without God is an impossible idea. In its old age it declared itself in favour of a State without God, and the anarchy of the French Revolution was the resultant *enfant terrible*. Since then other States have proclaimed themselves self-existent without God, and the result we have yet to see. Those who believe that a State without God will not long continue to exist as a State at all will not be sanguine as to that result. There is a perverse disposition in mankind to believe that identical causes need not produce identical

results, and the fact that causes do not always proceed at a uniform pace, owing to special obstacles, or the dissimilar gradients of roads, encourages them in this perversity. Thus English people, shocked at the consequences of a Godless State overseas, have always refused to believe that any deplorable result would accrue from similar behaviour at home. The English being, as they complacently averred, a believing people, nothing lamentable could happen from merely abstaining from teaching belief in the schools of the nation. It did not seem to occur to those who did believe that their belief was the consequence of their having themselves been taught to believe.

And there really was a mass of habitual, inherited belief and conscience. The fruits of the Reformation were not in England so quick to ripen as they might have been had not the English substitute for the Church clutched wistfully at much of the old Church's teaching, and endeavoured, more or less hopelessly, to retain it. Men were certainly free to believe what they liked, but they ought, in conscience, to go on liking to believe something. It was a later result of freedom to believe what you liked that you might prefer not to believe anything at all. Of course, if you did not, it seemed illogical to insist on your being taught belief. Still you ought to be good; a bad man or so, here and there, could be no excuse for your being bad too. Society must be respectable: whatever you disliked believing, you must, as a member of society, be respectable, or where were we? National respectability is a foregone English conclusion, like the National Debt—an impregnable security at three per cent. A disreputable England, without gilt-edged securities, would be an idea at which the English mind would

reel and stagger. France without God may very likely have lapsed into disreputable courses, but then French people and English are widely different. England is the land of home and large families; respectability is a national asset—like the cotton trade.

That the basis of respectability is morality, and the only permanent security of morality is belief in God, and the only security for a continued national belief in God is the continuance of a national teaching of God—that idea has been lost. Until it is regained, here and elsewhere, I, for one, do not place much hope in the efforts of any party or of any government, at home or abroad, to deal with the radical evils of which society complains.

## THE SHOE AND THE FOOT

Of all the charges brought against Catholics none is staler than that of bigotry; but what is effete is not always obsolete, and this old stone is still in vigorous use. To throw stones does not call for any acquaintance with geology, and wanton boys who throw them could not often tell you of what they actually consist. Thus it is with them who are bitterest against Catholic bigotry; they find the missile handy, and do not concern themselves greatly with what it means. In what, precisely, bigotry consists they have in general the vaguest knowledge.

That a religion, which believes itself to be the only true one, cannot possibly admit that any other is equally good, does not seem to occur to these subtle logicians. Their own attitude is puzzle-headed, and perspicacity is offensive to those in their predicament. Their position usually amounts to this: that in all religions there is some good, and that it cannot matter to God Almighty what men believe about Him. It certainly would not matter much to a lion if an explorer took him for a leveret: but it might affect the future of the explorer. In false religions stray reflections of truths or half truths may be detected, as in a wrong solution of a mathematical problem some figures may appear which are to be found in the true solution. Their presence does not make the false conclusion true, nor gain much respect from correct mathematicians.

There is, of course, invincible ignorance; and by its

lowly gate we hope many will arrive. But the gate is lowly, and the fact remains that it is nobler to have invincible truth on one's side. A man rooted in the conviction that two and two are five need not be a blackguard, but it is not mere bigotry or prejudice to hold him, so far, a dunce. One who should affirm that tigers are harmless little songsters, useful in gardens infested with green-fly, might conceivably be a worthy poor law guardian, or a successful organiser of charity bazaars, but he should beware the criticism of zoologists. His amiable willingness to see paupers well fed, and his pious zeal in providing funds for a new pulpit, will not save him from derision in circles that understand natural history.

Catholics do not desire to ignore the respectable citizenship of many who disbelieve in the Catholic faith, but, when correct belief is in question, they cannot admit that civic virtues are to the point—or private virtues either. A stockbroker might make a fortune though he held erratic views concerning algebra; so much the better for him, but not so much the worse for algebra. What these good folk can never understand is that, to those who hold the Church's faith, the truth is a fact, as actual as light, and that nothing else will do as well. To themselves the fact does not appeal any more than light appeals to the blind: so they talk nonsense about it, as a man born blind would, who insisted on laying down the law about colours and perspective. The blind man chooses to have his own ideas, and perhaps condemns the superciliousness of those who happen to have the gift of sight. If he be a moral person why should he be silenced though he insist that water is scarlet, and meadow-grass of a royal-blue tint?

This position of the Catholic Church is the real ground of the tedious charge of bigotry against her: that she will not consent to treat the sum of Revelation as an open question, any more than the arithmetician will agree to treat as an open question the sum of any given number of figures. She sticks to it that where the truth is concerned only absolute truth will do; she will not admit conjectures where Divine Revelation has been given, and tolerates no working hypothesis in place of certainty when she holds herself possessed of certainty. That possession of certitude is the grievance—for it rests on Divine Revelation: and what is valued outside is cocksureness resting on human discovery.

The real gravamen is the Church's willingness to hear God rather than men. The natural man dislikes what is supernatural; and the theory of private judgment is implicitly opposed to the recognition of absolute and immutable truth. The Reformation, which launched the leaky ship of private judgment, had no fear of the ocean of unbelief, its rocks and its whirlpools, its iron coasts of pitiless atheism, its leeshores of dull, swampy indifference and negation; all it dreaded was the presence of a pilot—for a pilot with full knowledge and complete authority seemed, to mutineers, a mere tyrant.

Free theory was to take the place of assured belief, and perhaps the Reformers themselves did not all realise what game they were playing. They professed, anyway, to have no quarrel with the King, but only to be in revolt against His accredited Viceroy. But their seed brought its due crop, as seed will, in spite of the private fancies of any gardener; and the dethronement of the Viceroy could never satisfy those who had really disliked the King's law. King and law must go too.

The Catholic Church, however, is one thing, Catholics are another. If the Church herself be not bigoted, unless it be bigotry to affirm truth and deny all that is logically inconsistent with truth, are Catholics bigoted? It would be a large assertion to say that all are not, that none ever has been. There may be some who find it easier to be bigoted than to follow the Church's counsels of perfection; simpler to perceive beams in other eyes than to pluck mere motes out of their own. As long as men are men, charity will be more difficult than criticism.

But are Catholics in the main more bigoted than Protestants or unbelievers? Is a Catholic more apt to dislike and distrust, decry and belittle another man simply because he is not a Catholic, than a Protestant or unbeliever is to dislike, mistrust, miscrey, and misprize a man because he is a Catholic? In that is sheer and real bigotry. How do the facts stand? Of course the answer must depend on experience, and everyone's experience is not the same. Each man must recall his own before he can reply. My own is this: I have met with very few bigoted Catholics in the sense in which, I take it, real bigotry lies. Indeed, I may truly say that I have met none.

One may meet Catholics who know very little of the best sort of non-Catholics, and, out of lack of experience, are inclined to lump all Protestants together as little better than non-believers. It being perfectly true of many Protestants that they believe very little—of Protestantism itself it is quite true to say that its ultimate logic is unbelief; but many decent people are better than their logic—they conclude that no Protestant believes much. That is a mistake, and experience would disabuse them of it: for many Protestants

still hold much Catholic doctrine. Such want of experience may be quite innocent and honest, but it is ignorance all the same. Ignorance, however, is not bigotry. And such ignorance is more common among Protestants than among Catholics. One finds it, among them, not only in people who would naturally be ill-informed, but in many whom one would suppose to possess reasonable information.

Not many weeks ago the present writer made the acquaintance of an elderly lady who would certainly consider herself well-educated. It was almost an adventure to her to find herself in friendly conversation with a priest—a servant of the Pope. And I think she enjoyed it; adventures did not occur frequently in her somewhat monotonous life. She was so favourably impressed that she was good enough, when the priest was gone, to express some frank approbation. "But, ah! how sad," she wailed, "to think that he may not believe in the Divinity of Jesus Christ."

She was sure he would, if his terrible Church would let him. Not that they had discussed religion at all; but he seemed so respectable.

For one Catholic rather ignorant as to what the better sort of Protestants believe, one would find hundreds of non-Catholics wholly ignorant of what it is all Catholics believe. I have never met any Catholic who would refuse to trust a man, to believe his word, or to like him, if he were likeable, merely because he happened to be a Protestant. And I have met, and often meet, many Protestants who will not trust, or believe, or like a Catholic, for no other reason whatever than that he is one. These people call themselves Christians, but they will not so distrust or dislike a Jew, they have no misgivings about Parsees, or



Buddhists, or Mussulmans. Atheists they revere for an intellectual eminence that they take for granted. But Catholics are unpardonable, because they are Catholics. It does not alarm them if they perceive their sons making friends with a Jewish peer's son, still less are they perturbed if the Hebrew nobleman's son bestows attention on one of their daughters. Nor are they nervously apprehensive though their children develop intimacies with Atheists, Mohammedans, Parsees, or Buddhists. Why not? Why is there so much fear of Catholic influence, so little of any other?

Why should it be only an amiable eccentricity if a son or daughter turns Buddhist, and forswears meat altogether, but so grievous an affront if he or she turns Catholic and only eschews it on Fridays? You might suppose that a parent who every Sunday professes to believe in the Holy Catholic Church would be less grieved to see a child of his return to the faith once held by all his boasted ancestors than to learn that that child had abandoned all belief. But it is not commonly the case. The agnosticism of a son in his teens is treated as of small account: but if another son, a year or two older or younger, should become a Catholic, then there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, and, not seldom, for him, ostracism from intercourse with his brothers or sisters.

Is it really in these people's opinion "safer to believe too little than to believe too much"? Is it really of the soul of their child they are thinking at all? Do they care sixpence for his soul? Are they in honest dread of its perdition? If one believed that, one could have a respect for their trouble: but if one believed that, one could believe anything. *Alas!* it is not possible. If there were any such tender solicitude for

the soul of a son or daughter, then would they not be more at ease when one lost faith altogether than when the other went back to the faith of illustrious forefathers? It is sheer hatred of the Church, and mean suspicion and paltry fear.

On what is such a fear, and dislike, and suspicion grounded? To a very large extent it is a question of money. An ignoble reason, but, I believe, very often the true one: these folk imagine that Catholics give all their substance to the Church, and it is by no means held a virtue in them. "It's no use giving anything, or leaving anything, to him," they say, "he would hand it all over to the Pope."

The Pope ought to be better off than he is. Catholics are truly good about giving: rich and poor they are more than generous in this sort—for generosity is not always self-denying: but I confess that, after four-and-thirty years of Catholic life, I do not perceive any violent tendency on the part of the Pope's spiritual children to adopt him as their temporal heir. The truth is, these people grudge fiercely anything given to Catholic objects, and they are right in surmising that a Catholic who cares for his Church will even deny himself to support it. Once I heard a Protestant lady complain piteously that, owing to her husband's elder brother having joined the Church and become a priest, all his money went to Catholic uses, and so following—to the unjust detriment of her husband. The facts of the case happened to be well known to me.

The elder brother in question had a family estate, and certain moneys that had come to him by independent bequest to him personally. The whole income of the paternal property he had, for over thirty years, from the time he became a priest, made over to his

younger brothers—who had for thirty years enjoyed an income that certainly would never have been theirs had he remained a Protestant, married, and had children in due course. At his death, the estate, instead of passing to any child of his own, would go to the husband of my complaining lady. As to the income that had been left to him personally, and would certainly never have been left to any other member of his family, he held himself free to spend it as he chose, and he chose to spend none of it upon himself, but devoted it to pious uses. There was the grievance: had he given it to his second brother, his sister-in-law would have had more pin-money. No human being would have complained, had he not turned Catholic, had he lived to man's allotted spell in selfish extravagance; but in becoming a priest, in giving his own means to support works of eternal profit, he had behaved ill, and was another flagrant instance of the mischief to families of having a Catholic in them.

More recently a friend of mine joined the Church, and as his only son was a child, he had him instructed in his own faith, and received into the Church, too, and presently sent him to a Catholic school. The child's mother had not the least objection. But people wholly unrelated to either father or mother flew to arms, as if it were an unheard-of thing for a father to bring his son up in his own faith; people whose own religious zeal found no other expression than in furious quarrelling with their parish clergyman. Why should they care? Well, the small boy stands in succession to an estate, and the Pope naturally would know that, and have an eye to it.

What makes this sort of fussy bigotry the more

annoying is that it is commonly betrayed by people whom one cannot reasonably believe to have any real religious susceptibilities whatever: they are not scandalised by defective morality, profanity does not shock them, unless it be of the clumsy sort that is ill-bred; they often are without even the pretence of any religious belief themselves, but that does not disarm their hostility to one particular religious belief, and only one, that of the Catholic Church. As they have no faith in any future life, they cannot possibly have any misgiving lest the eternal future of the convert to Catholicity should be imperilled. They do not, in fact, concern themselves with any such matter. They think the Catholic religion a bad business for this life, because they perceive there is so much of it: and the less the better in their opinion.

They like a Sunday religion, or rather an every-other Sunday religion. They dislike the all-the-weekness of Catholicism, and angrily resent its ubiquity, its tiresome proneness to assert itself in daily life. The religion, they think, of a well-bred person should be as well concealed as his ribs, whereas that of a Catholic is apt to show itself disconcertingly.

When a member of some wholly unreligious family turns Catholic the other members are affronted; and I cannot help suspecting that one reason for this not very logical attitude of theirs is this: they divine, by an uneasy instinct, that a standard of life and conduct is being set up in their neighbourhood the presence of which will be a sting to religious indifference, a disagreeable suggestion of contrast, a reminder of things they find it convenient to forget. To the fixedly worldly person nothing is less welcome than the intimate society of some one whose very life and presence com-

pels them to a constant remembrance that there is another world, and that the way to it is not all ease and self-indulgence.

One of the great advantages of Protestantism, these people feel, is that you can have as little of it as you like. It is not, they surmise, quite so with Catholicism. And they shrewdly suspect that the son or daughter, brother or sister, of their own, who returns to the old faith will not take so much trouble merely to be a bad Catholic. It is the introduction of a markedly religious element into their household that they resent.

## OF OLD WAYS

JEREMIAS vi. 16

WHEN Eliseus bade the Syrian go and wash in the Jordan he was angry: not because the thing enjoined was difficult, but because there was nothing striking in it. And the world is like him. It can never understand how great effects can follow on causes that seem inadequate to them; for it never wishes to recognise the miraculous or the supernatural. St. Dominic's answer to a heresy that seemed to threaten Christendom was a string of beads; and yet in those chains the dead heresy was presently hanging in the wind, like the bones of a dead malefactor.

When St. Benedict perceived the rottenness of the great Roman world of his day, he fled into the wilderness out of its sight: an odd way, men would say, to heal or help it. Yet he was an apostle, and his apostolate long outlived himself, and brought to the feet of Christ nations far beyond the frontiers of the Roman power. That apostolate was of a sort that, to the materially-minded, appeared then, and appears now, wholly unfitted to the task before it; for it was not one of loud speech, nor of bustling interference. Its essential feature was silence and thought.

Neither of those things are more popular now than they were fourteen hundred years ago. Even with some Catholics they are unpopular. There are, nowa-

days, plenty of Catholics who imagine, and even say, that contemplative religion is unsuited to our time—as there were Catholics in St. Benedict's time who mis-cried him, and saw no sense or use in his methods; who deemed him egoistic, selfish, almost crazy. The attitude of those contemporaries of Benedict I take to have been this: here, they urged, is a world half-pagan, how can you convert it by hiding yourself from it in the glens of the hills or on the top of precipitous mountains? Every man with a zeal for religion whom you draw to your side is a preacher silenced, a worker lulled into idleness. You are God's thief, who are stealing from His apostolate the very men whom it needs.

And that is precisely what many who are Catholics, and not unzealous in their fashion, say or think now. They can realise no fashion but their own. In a very noisy, very irritable, very shallow, and intensely materialistic age, they cannot perceive that they themselves are infected with its microbe. They do indeed desire the conversion of the world; but only by a noise as loud as its own, by counter-irritants, and very shallow expedients, and by material efforts, can they conceive the possibility of anything being done. They do not indeed say, and we must not discredit them by supposing that they mean, that prayer is of little account; but the only kind of prayer they understand is that which many of those they would convert admit also—the prayer of demand, or intercession. And it does not seem unfair to surmise that prayer, in their estimation, is of far less consequence than action and speech.

The prayer of oblation, self-dedication, and of contemplation, they are often disposed to belittle: even to

miscall, as mediæval and out of date, as they would say. They cannot believe that Carthusian and Cistercian monks or Carmelite nuns, behind the meek curtain of their silence, are working for the conversion of England and of the world. It is all too supernatural for them. They can see only what is material, and hear only voices as loud as their own: it slips their comprehension that God sees without eyes and hears without ears; that He hears when there is no crying or uplifting of noisy talk in His Holy mountain, and sees oblations to themselves invisible and, therefore, to them non-existent. They cannot perceive that sacrifice is the highest worship, and that the total sacrifice of self, in union with the Eternal Sacrifice of the Master, is noblest service. They are all Marthas, willing to complain of Mary sitting to listen, while they run about.

This I take to be the effect of environment. There is no Catholic boast truer than that of the identity of the Church in all lands. The outer world is unable to gainsay it, and they who mislike her love her no more here than there. Somebody once asked what there was in common between Cardinal Newman and a Calabrian peasant. The answer is—the Catholicity of both. One was learned, the other might be ignorant; one was steeped in theology, the other was only born heir to its inheritance; one was gifted with insight into the grounds of faith, the other merely stood on them. Nationality, taste, education, were widely different; there was only one thing in common, but that one thing was the thing that mattered most to each of them—that they were each of them Catholics.

I have knelt before the Blessed Sacrament with a Hindu peasant on each side of me; a Hindu is far less like a European than a Calabrian is like an English-

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man; but in one thing we were simply the same, in being both of us converts and both Catholics.

I have stood in St. Peter's when, in a late autumn afternoon, fifty thousand pilgrims showed like a dark shadow on its floor, and only high up, hundreds of feet above our heads, long yellow shafts of light seemed caught in a mesh of gold; the crowd was of many nations and many tongues, of conflicting political aims and interests; the wise, maybe, and the unwise, lettered and unlearned, the tender and the rough, the refined and the coarse. Then, from the great chapel, where Sixtus and Julius lie before the Blessed Sacrament for ever, came forth a procession, not striking by force of numbers, but striking in all besides. A soldier-group, that seemed ending a march started in the Renaissance, tall, stalwart, manly, erect, strong in all the gracious strength of youth; a group of prelates, in princely purple; courtiers in grave Spanish dress, sedately black; more soldiers, and, in their midst, a carrying-chair closely shut, whose occupant the people could not yet see. Slowly, to the bottom of the shadowy great church, the procession moved down, and there the chair gave up its burden, and the old, old man that had sat hidden within it crept forth and took his seat in another, like a throne, resting on a broad, flat stage that now was raised on to men's shoulders, so that in the dim light the bent white figure could at last be seen.

Then, in all the packed crowd, for a moment was a hush, like a gasp; and then a rustle, as when a gust shakes the forest, and all the black mass was whitened with a flutter like snow, but that it was flung upward; and one great cry, in a hundred tongues, broke, like a moan or a sigh at first, and burst into such acclaim as

gripped the heart and made the ears swim and tingle that heard only a single word: "The Pope!"

But that one word, like one seal upon an inviolable treaty of union, made all these strangers brothers; each other's speech they could not understand, but one thing they understood, the name that means Father. They were all his children; gathered from the four winds of God, for one supreme moment they were all at home. For they were there, and he was there, and it was his house, and theirs, too. Diverse as they were, in colour and speech and race, in a hundred human warring interests, his blessing falling on them made them all one; for the only thing that mattered, then and there, was the one thing shared equally by all: that they were all Catholics.

Ah! yes, the Church of God is one. "My perfect one is but one," sings the divine spouse to her. But, for all that, her feet are set in many lands, and her children are scattered up and down the earth. She is divine, they are human; and human things press upon them and affect them.

The Church is not less one that these children of hers are so different, each from other; her oneness is the more amazing. Let us say again that the world itself is sullenly aware of it, and hisses against that wall of unity, never daring to hope that, like the walls of Jericho, it will fall at its voice.

I never forget that essential unity for a moment: but neither should we forget the natural influences that, unheeded, might end in tearing us, ourselves, down out of our citadel of unity. Against the Church hell's gates shall not prevail, but against you and me they may prevail, unless we take good heed. She shall be always one: let us mind ourselves, that in every-

thing we are one with her. There is, then, the influence of environment to beware of.

For centuries English Catholics have been a tiny islet in a sea, first Protestant and Puritan, and now more and more pagan. Has it had no influence? To me it seems that the effect is double; on the one hand there is the effect of repulsion: we have suffered more from outside than they have in Latin countries, and naturally we feel a deeper repugnance and antagonism, a sterner resentment, even. We are more self-conscious of the presence of alien forces. Latin Catholics have not needed to be constantly thinking of non-Catholic scrutiny; they have not suffered from persecution and libel at the hands of men professing the name of Christ. The sword has not entered into their flesh, as it has into ours; to them Protestantism is not much more than a name for a thing to them merely silly and incomprehensible. We think too much of it: we are over-sensitive of its opinion, its criticism, its judgment, and its odious comparisons. And so this first effect merges to the other.

A certain puritan tinge results. We know that puritan standards have nothing to do with us: nevertheless we would like to disarm them. We are not amenable to alien criticism, but we would fain silence it. It is not in affairs of faith that this affects us, but in matters of method; though in matters even of faith some are timidly anxious to make such presentations as may render points of doctrine less obnoxious to those who have none. Such timidity, like all timidity, is ten times more dangerous than plain courage.

But it is in matters not of faith but of method that, as it seems to me, this nervous wistfulness to forestall a criticism that need not at all concern us most

manifests itself. That we should earnestly desire the salvation of all souls is a part of the alphabet of religion. But the first letter in it is the salvation of our own. That, as it would seem, is not the Protestant counsel of perfection: everybody else's soul should come before it; and something before that—the philanthropy that is specially concerned with material betterment. So that non-Catholic piety is, before all things, utilitarian.

Now, Catholic piety is wholly different, for it rests not on the theory of the rights of man, but on faith in the indefeasible rights of God. I cannot help thinking that in some there is an uneasy feeling that unless we copy every species of non-Catholic activity, we are idle, and falling behind in the race. With Protestantism we have no race; we start from a different point, and do not follow the same course.

That we should be active, industrious, energetic, not sparing ourselves for others, is not merely well, it is pre-understood. But I cannot perceive why every branch of non-Catholic activity need have a counterpart of ours. If non-Catholics twitted us with not having such a society, or such an institute, our answer might be, "We have seven Sacraments. Where are yours?" Our object is not merely the promotion of comfortable-ness here, but the attainment of bliss ineffable hereafter. Till our object is the same our methods may well be different.

I am making no plea for Catholic laziness, or indifference, but only asking that natural activities should not make us belittle or forget supernatural means to supernatural ends. It is not true that the Church must fit herself to a new age: her fitness for every age is part of her inherent Divine being. God knows

everything, but He knows nothing of accommodation; He is the self-same, and His Church reflects Him. A Church which fussily attitudinised to suit the twentieth century could never be the Church of any other.

Does the twentieth century need a St. Benedict less than the fifth? The cave at Subiaco was an odd-seeming cure for the huge Roman world; but it cured it, not by a new gospel, but by the old. Its silence was a reminder of the silence of Christ during thirty out of three and thirty years. To do God's work on earth it taught the primary necessity of thought of Him in heaven. This is no quietism. Was St. Ignatius a quietist? Are the Jesuits quietists? Yet, is there any Order that, in its practice as in its theory, makes more of meditation?

The shallow and irritable vulgarity of criticism would discern in Benedict one spirit, in Ignatius another. A thousand years divided them, nothing else. And across all those years of change an indestructible bridge stretches to unite them—the theory of the highest prayer: contemplation of God.

## SCIENTIÆ INIMICI

IN the last of these essays incidental and brief allusion was made to that identity of Catholicism with itself all over the world which causes it to be equally disliked and suspected by the same sort of people everywhere. That identity with itself not only in all places, but in all ages also, is illustrated by their treatment of its history. Those unmistakable features which are recognisable everywhere to-day they do not fail to perceive as distinctive of it from the beginning, and when they compose history, or survey it, they are always confronted by the same qualities, principles, methods, and obstinacies in the Church which arouse their opposition and animosity now. It is obvious that when they are assailing contemporary Catholicity, and when they are sitting in judgment on the Church in other ages, they are assailing and judging the same thing. Their enemy of the present day is identical with the historical enemy whose presence on the stage of past times they so fiercely resent.

There are now, as there have been almost from the beginning of Christianity, those who claim the name of Catholic, but are not in communion with the visible Head of the Church on earth. It is certain that they have never been regarded as Catholics by those who, as outsiders altogether, are themselves unconcerned by the claim: a Jew has nothing to do with the Church but he is perfectly able to recognise its existence, and

to know where it is: no Jew ever yet spoke of Catholics and meant any but those who are under the Pope's obedience: but a Jew believes in God, and there are historians, sociologists, and what not, who believe in no God, yet they are bitterly aware of the Catholic Church as a pregnant historical fact, and none of them in alluding to the Catholic Church has ever meant any Church but that of which the Pope is the Head.

This identity of Catholicism with itself, in every place and every period, makes it easy for those who have a statement about it to formulate to do so without reservation, whether the statement be eulogistic or intended in accusation.

A Catholic writer who would say anything about Protestantism is not in the same easy position. He may, indeed, perceive one logical principle underlying all Protestantism, as the principle of anarchy, which was its mother and will be its daughter; but nothing is less agreeable to Protestantism, or more alien from it, than logic: and, so far as it continues to hold on to Christianity at all, it does so chiefly by refusing to hold hands with logic. But though this one principle of anarchy may be discernible in all Protestantism, it can never be a principle of union, but must, of its nature, be one of disintegration and division. To say that all Protestantism is united by an innate principle of anarchy would be the same as saying that a house is united by being divided against itself. And Protestantism has no other common feature recognisable in different countries and different periods: for to say that it has always the common feature of antagonism and rebellion against the Pope is only to say the same thing over again. In the Pope Protestantism always and everywhere perceived, and perceives, the embodiment

of the principle of authority, with which that of anarchy is incompatible.

Even at their birth English and Continental Protestantism had little in common beyond this instinctive recognition of the Pope as the arch-enemy. For in England it was the great preoccupation of the new religion to seem as like the old as circumstances permitted, and Continental Protestantism was eager to get as far from Catholicity as might be consistent with retaining the name of Christianity at all. Those who engineered the Reformation-process in England were willing that the people should go on thinking themselves Catholics; for they wanted a national change, and the people, as they well knew, wanted no change at all. Foreign reformers, less sanguine of national results, aimed more at individual conversions, and could be more outspoken. Not that even foreign reformers followed the same lines everywhere, either in doctrine or in externals. Some were still willing to mount on a spar of wreckage and call it a visible Church, others wanted no visible Church; some clung to one or two sacraments, others would not hear of any; some had no objection to bishops and priests, so long as they had no essential use, and others were determined that every man should be his own priest and his own pope. The ineffable Knox brought his Protestantism from overseas, and Scottish national Protestantism hated English Prelacy as venomously as it hated Romish papistry itself.

But English Protestantism was never one and indivisible; that was a title reserved *in petto* for the Republic that set up the goddess of Reason; or said so, only Reason, knowing herself the daughter and servant of God, would not act, and Folly clambered up



to masquerade upon the new and bloody altar in her name. As soon as England found itself Protestant it began chopping Protestantism for itself. Acts of Parliament might have been necessary to make one new religion, but without any Act of Parliament the English felt themselves capable of inventing newer religions for themselves. If the Pope had been in the King's way, they found archbishops and bishops in theirs. The Pope had claimed obedience as speaking in God's name; to yield religious obedience where no particular claim was made was even more intolerable. So the dragon's teeth sent up their rotten harvest. All this is stale enough, and the restatement of it is only made as being essential to what I want to say next.

Protestantism being so diverse, the Catholic writer who aims at being just and candid finds himself in a difficulty. There is hardly anything he can say of Protestantism which would be true of all sorts of Protestants, and he desires to libel no one. All non-Catholics who remain, or think they remain, Christians, are in fact protestant; this is true even of schismatics who hold nearly all Catholic truth, and have sacraments and a priesthood. It is taken as granted by the world at large, that never would speak of "Orthodox" Greeks or Russians as Catholics.

But many things a Catholic writer might say of Protestantism he would not mean of schismatics, like the Greeks, nor even of sections in the Anglican Church. Among these latter he knows well there are many who hold much of the Catholic faith, as there are many more who hold to very little of revealed Christianity of any colour. This being premised, it will be understood with what limitations we say that,

just as Protestantism has loved to accuse Catholicism of bigotry, so has it loved to fling other stones and heavier.

There are certain favourites, of which we may mention three. The Church is accused (1) of being obscurantist, hating knowledge, and desperately eager to hide herself in a sort of giant's coat of darkness; (2) of being immoral; (3) of being untruthful. Of these three accusations we have only space in this paper to speak of one.

And first, then, that she is obscurantist, an enemy to knowledge, and desirous of fleeing to ignorance as a last refuge and forlorn hope—where her saints are hidden by fifties in a cave. It is held proved that she is obscurantist when she cannot prove that she has flung herself into the arms of a new theory in science or sociology; this she is very backward in trying to prove. She prefers waiting, in case the new theory should itself be disproved by a newer yet; and she has a tiresome habit of refusing to receive the ambassadors of a brilliant conjecture as though they represented an impregnable fact. She did not begin last week; and in the course of nearly two thousand years she has witnessed the arrival of a good many new theories. They mostly announced themselves pretty loudly, without any painful diffidence, and she has had time to note their departure, though they withdrew more silently, with no definiteness of leave-taking. "We have come; you had better look to yourself, madam," they said, with some asperity. But they seldom have declared, "We are retiring, madam, and leaving you where we found you."

Obscurantism is darkening up the light, and a lot of new rags can shut it out wonderfully for a time: when

wind and weather have torn and worn them to shreds, the light is found to have been behind all the time.

She is accused of hating knowledge because she fears it. One thing she admits: that she is sure God is the source of *all* knowledge, and that that cannot be knowledge which begins by saying, "I am here to knock God to pieces." Fear is the apprehension of evil, and she is very ready to fear that which comes threatening the greatest of all evils to her conceivable. She has no fears for God; He does not stand or fall by man's belief in Him; He is not more omnipotent when His creatures confess His power, nor less Almighty when they are blind to His might. He is not like earthly kings, whose sovereignty is lost when their subjects are lost. But though she has no fear of God's losing anything, she fears lest men should lose everything; and all is lost to them when their belief in Him is lost. The Eternal Monarch can be deprived of nothing; but if His subjects renounce their allegiance it is they who are exiled, homeless, beggared, hopeless.

This attitude of the Church is always misunderstood or misrepresented. It is glibly assumed that she fears knowledge as her own natural enemy, and on her own account; that she is aware of her hold on men being rooted in men's ignorance, and therefore obstinately and malignantly opposed to the spread of knowledge, because it would narrow her boundaries and emancipate the minds of her subjects from their slavish deference; because, in other words, she is guiltily conscious that the spread of knowledge is the antidote to priestcraft.

Those who bring this accusation choose to regard the Church as a human invention, or an inhuman. They never have enough of the critical faculty to bear in mind that she regards herself as a Divine institution,

with no independent aims at all, and no hand of her own to play; existing not for herself but for Him whose earthly vicegerent she is. When anything novel or unproved is presented to her cognisance, for examination and judgment, she tries it not by the subtle, intricate considerations by which they suppose her to be influenced, but by one so simple that they refuse to believe in it. How, she asks, will this stand one plain test? Is it from God? If so it must be for God. That which is not for Him is against Him; and that which is against Him is against man, who is not independent of Him, but dependent on Him. Man's interest, in her simple view, cannot be served by anything directed against Him. This is all her craft. There is nothing subtle in it, and nothing secret. It is not a late refinement of policy, but has been her single principle from first to last.

If she has seemed antagonistic to some things called knowledge, the antagonism has not been originated by her, but provoked by those who spoke in its name, for they have been at pains to assert that the new knowledge and the old God were incompatible. If that be so, she says, the new knowledge must be ignorance; and, in opposing it, she takes arms not for darkness, but for light. And this she does not as in trepidation for her God, who has nothing to lose, for He *can* lose nothing, but because she is the Divinely appointed custodian of the eternal interests of men, who *may* lose everything, should she suffer them to be robbed in silence. In such a robbery she can be no accomplice.

This singleness and simplicity of view gives her a different judgment as to ignorance from that held by her critics. In ignorance, as in knowledge, there are

many degrees; but to her the deepest ignorance is that of essentials, and the most essential thing of all is God. She is not, therefore, ashamed to own that, in her view, a scientific discoverer who has undiscovered God, is more ignorant than a peasant who, if he knows little else, is as sure of God's existence as he is of his own. Nor does she shrink from confessing that she would liever have men believe in the Creator with but a partial understanding of all the marvels of creation, rather than that they should accumulate whole encyclopædias of theoretic explanations of created nature and lose sight of the Creator behind the mass accumulated. Her refusal to rush out and evacuate her position at every summons does not spring from a jealous dread of selfish loss, but from an impregnable certainty that God is indestructible, and that they who would destroy Him are dooming themselves to destruction. It is her business to keep her children from ruin. Of selfish loss she takes wonderfully small account. Material loss she constantly suffers rather than suffer one principle to be relinquished. That is why Popes have died in exile, and the Pope at this moment stands with only enough of earth for his feet, but his head in heaven. That is why the Church in England is not the Church of England, and the Church of France exists not by the State's help, but in spite of the State's bitter endeavour to strangle her.

Material loss she faces, and has always faced, with a magnificent courage, founded not on human valour but on Divine faith: it is spiritual loss she will not agree to. For herself she is quite fearless; in time she knows herself indestructible. The gates of hell cannot prevail against her; she has the promise, and she never forgets Who made it, though men forget. But there is no

promise that those gates shall not prevail against men, and men are her charge, as they are God's creatures and subjects. It is her business to save them from ruin. If there comes something calling itself knowledge, and announcing its errand to be the emancipation of men from belief in God, it is her function to warn them, and to make no treaty with their confessed foe, till the only terms of agreement are offered that in her Master's name she can accept.

It is not she, but the *soi-disant* knowledge that declares the war. All real knowledge is from Him, she knows; *Lignum crucis arbor scientiæ*. But she cannot forget that former tree whose bitter fruit the red juice of the cross healed, and the false promise made by the enemy: Eat of it, and Man shall be as God and know all things; and man ate, and his first fruit of knowing all things was to think that behind a bush he could hide himself from God.

The last tree with the old name is worse than the first. Adam's eating made him silly enough to hide from omniscience behind a few green leaves, it did not make him silly enough to deny God's presence altogether. They who feed on the gaudy fruit of the new tree, in the world-old lust of knowing all things, run about and cry that there is no God, and, naked, they are not ashamed. They prate of law; the whole universe, they say, is the growth of inexorable law; and they say, in the same breath, there is no lawgiver; as if any law could make itself and force itself to be obeyed. The first Adam lost the garden and had to wring reluctant fruits out of the slow soil with sweat and secular toil; these new Adams run out into the desert of themselves, to fill their hands with its hot sand, and cry out to those in the garden to come

thence and eat with them; and all the while the sands themselves are running out of their clutching grasp. Time watching with dry smile how Eternity draws on. Shall we leave the garden for Fools' Paradise? *We know what we believe, ye believe ye know not what.*

Is it ignorance to hold fast the Church's serene unearthly certitude, where one clear voice says always one sure thing, rather than run out, like wanton babes, to play at bursting bubbles of conjecture? The most brilliant conjecture may be false: if it turn out right, it has but caught a little truth upon the wing. Where it arrives we started. Can we not bear to be called fools for the sake of being on the side of Omniscience?

Do let us understand this: the Church's call to obedience is no invitation to take our stand in the ranks of ignorance, but to resist the most destructive of all ignorance. God knows all things, and it is on His side she asks us to be. He has brought us into His citadel of light and peace, and we can say, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see." Are we to jump overboard from Peter's ship of safety because a man comes drifting by on a bobbing plank he has found for himself in the waste of waters?

For my part I do not believe in the sincerity of this accusation brought against the Church that she is obscurantist, hating and fearing knowledge, and finding her Adullam in the cave of ignorance whither those of mean parts may resort to her. Her history too flagrantly gives the lie to it: her fostering of learning and letters, when there was none else to keep learning and letters alive, her encouragement of scholars, her rewards to them, her motherly pride in them. The whole foundation of letters was laid in Catholic times

by Catholic hands, the Church guiding and blessing their work. When such a word as *University* is used, the very idea brought to the mind is not of a modern degree-shop, but of one of those seats of immemorial learning that sprang up in ages of Catholic faith and acquired prestige from the intellects trained in them by the Church, sent to them by the Church, and taught in them by masters that the Church herself had taught.

This is so true that it has acquired the flatness of a truism. But no one *honestly* forgets it. When it is ignored, it is ignored on purpose.

Just as the Church is accused of bigotry by those who are most bigoted themselves, so is she accused of hating knowledge and wishing to keep knowledge from the people, by those whose own aim it is to deprive the people of the one essential knowledge the absence of which is impenetrable ignorance. The accusation is too passionate: it protests too much. It betrays a shrill note of envy and jealousy. The unbelievers have no Aquinas, agnosticism can have no pope, for definitions of uncertainty cannot be infallible, or even claim infallibility; though unnumbered antipopes of agnosticism bid the people take ship with them, on a stormy voyage, for the dull and bleak haven of indecision.

It is their instinctive sense that they have so little to promise that makes them bitter in their envy. Life is not over-jocund. "See how dark the present is," they say, "and your Church has only Hope to offer." And, in place of it, they have only despair to propose as substitute. It is not the Church's ignorance that really angers them, but her serene knowledge: conjecture based on a mosaic of ever-shifting human discovery cannot forgive certainty founded on divine revelation. It is not really the Church that disconcerts them but the Holy Ghost.

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Are they convertible? All things are possible with God; and many of them have been converted. Many more will be, but not by any homœopathic cure, not by conceding small doses of the very poisons that infect them. It is not true that the best way of fighting the devil is by borrowing his own weapons. God has his own armoury and needs no borrowing. Read St. Paul's description of the whole armour of God, and see how little condescendence is in it, and how sublime faith. If we should fail in this new struggle it would not be because we had neglected to arm ourselves with new weapons, but because we had neglected the old. Unfaith is never cured by timid advances to meet it half-way on its own ground. With what a little pebble David felled Goliath: our danger would lie in despising the little pebbles ourselves, and consenting to cumber ourselves with an armour like the Philistine's. The saints conquered heresies by being saints; but we think it easier to learn the wisdom of the unbeliever than to spell out the slow alphabet of sanctity. It will be by what we are, not by what we know, that we shall convert the Church's modern foes, if we ever do convert them.

Can we not be patient, like our Mother the Church? We can never force God's hand, nor teach Him to do things our way. May we not, we who are so clever, be content to be thought fools this little while?

Is the folly of the Cross a new idea? And must we be greater than the Master: is it not enough on his own warning that the servant should be as his Lord? And yet He will no more call us servants but friends. The friendship of God should console us for the little stone of folly flung from outside, though it be aimed at the heads we make so much of.

## LAXITY OR SANCTITY

IN the last of these papers we spoke of three, among many, of the stones flung at the Church by the more wanton and unscrupulous, or the more ignorant and stupid of her ill-wishers. There are many entirely without faith themselves, or without that degree of faith that leads to recognition of the Church's supernatural character and divine mission, who throw no such stones. Their attitude is not always lacking in respect: and, if there must be a supernatural religion at all, they would as lief have the Catholic faith as any, though it be obviously the most supernatural of all; and they are ready to admit the existence of much that is noble in her history, great wisdom and instinct in her dealings with men, and a splendid philanthropy in her most typical children, as, for instance, in her religious of the active kind, and even in some of her saints.

Those who do malign the Church are not particularly consistent in the charges they bring, nor are the charges commonly formulated with any great precision. They are apt to take the shape of vague generalisations, or of ill-natured innuendo.

So, when the Church is miscalled as immoral, all sorts of different charges are meant, ranging from flat and coarse accusations of immorality in her priesthood, to the insinuation that high morality is not consistent with the submission of the individual conscience to a

human and absolute authority interposed between it and God.

As to the first of these sorts of charges, it is very wholesale in character, and is apt to assume that Catholic priests are of defective morality chiefly because of the Church's discipline as to clerical celibacy. The Church perversely insists on an unmarried priesthood, and the priesthood revenges itself, so to speak, by a shocking laxity in morals. Such an accusation proceeds from a very ugly pessimism, which really assumes the impossibility of continence, and throws a somewhat lurid light on the mental purity of those who bring it. So far from proving them to be the superior persons they figure as, it destroys the value of their opinion by the intimation it gives of their inability to conceive a very high standard of morality. A perfectly honest man is the last to accuse others of dishonesty: the man who shows us that he believes everybody is sure to pilfer or peculate who is short of money, and has the means of helping himself out of other people's pockets, we infallibly perceive to be himself of a low standard of rectitude. His uncharitableness is not only stupid and narrow, but mean, and we are warned not to trust him. The readiness to bring certain charges labels the person who has it. It amounts in the case we are dealing with to the unconscious confession: "I, if I were unmarried, would be loose—all unmarried persons are. The Catholic clergy are unmarried, therefore we may be pretty sure they are of lax morality."

These gentry have very short memories—for what is good, and obstinately tenacious memories for what is bad. The history of the Church is nearly two thousand years old, and no one denies that there have been scandals. That they would come we were warned by

the Founder of the Church; they are not forgotten and never will be, so long as there are people in the world whose idea of a nose is of a thing to be kept fixed at the leaks in a sewer. But it is odd to remember that such scandals occurred oftenest when the Church's discipline of celibacy was most disregarded: the Popes who strove hardest to enforce it did most to maintain and revive the highest standard of sacerdotal perfection.

At the Reformation the new sects finally cast off the discipline of clerical celibacy: we are not here pointing to any connection between the apostasy of the heretical priests with their violation of celibacy, we merely mention a boasted fact. At the same time the retention of the discipline of celibacy became a special note of the Church that held to its obedience, and remained Catholic. Since that time, then, the Catholic priesthood has been notoriously celibate: the reformed clergy notoriously married. Has the advantage, on the side of purity since, been clearly with the latter?

We do not wish to throw stone for stone. We have no desire to brand the reformed clergy as immoral; but have scandals been more common and notorious among us than among them? It must be remembered that, owing to our much more stringent ecclesiastical supervision, and to the watchfulness of our people themselves, a scandalous priest is singularly unlikely to escape detection and disgrace. And in England such detection is followed by a gloating publicity. Yet, for one such miserable shame to us, do we not see in newspapers very many cases of outrageous scandals among clergy who do not belong to the Church? It is a hateful subject, and we have no intention of labouring the point.

As to the old and very stale accusation of monks and nuns, that also proceeds generally from mouths that plainly prove their own extreme uncleanness; when, in place of an obscene rhetoric, judicial investigation is attempted, the result is most disappointing to those who would hope to see the blackest case made out. Candid witnesses confess that no evidence is forthcoming to justify those who were eagerly alert to detect general corruption in the body of religious, men or women, as a pretext for the dissolution of the abbeys and monasteries whose property Henry VIII had determined to steal. Great Catholic historians, like Abbot Gasquet, have done incalculable service to truth in this matter, but they do not stand alone; and judicially-minded historians on the non-Catholic side have only supported their testimony.

The accusation of the religious, like that of the celibate priesthood, is, we must say again, not an evidence of Catholic corruption, but a most patent and most shameful proof of the prurience of them who have revelled in it. "Escaped" nuns and "escaped" monks grow rich on filth, or remain poor. An itching prurience fills the halls where they fabulate charges; and the halls will not fill again for the same speakers unless the foul appetite is fed. It is a crusade of dirt.

Those who take arms in this crusade are evidences of the untruth of what they pretend—that the Church is less moral than themselves. They label themselves unclean, and the sound of their bell is a warning that lepers are about. They cannot believe in a lofty ideal, and by their inability to conceive of the highest standard they show us how great is the fall from Catholic practice to Protestant theory, from Catholic purity to Protestant respectability; for it is quite respectable

to take your wife and your daughters to listen in a crowded hall to a man or woman talking the most unbridled beastliness.

Against all this accusation of low morality in practice, stands the huge bulk of the sanctity of the saints. To leave alone altogether "primitive" saints—who were as like modern Protestants as Primitive Methodists are like the Archbishop of Canterbury—let us concern ourselves only with modern saints, *i.e.* with those whom the Church has canonised since Dr. Martin Luther went to claim his crown from the Lamb, followed whithersoever He goeth by the hundred and forty and four thousand which were undefiled with women, redeemed from among men, the first-fruits to God and the Lamb.

We take those post-Reformation saints not because they differed in any way from pre-Reformation saints, but simply because they belonged to the Church against which the reformed sects were in arms after the defection of the latter: they were "only Roman Catholic saints." At what precise period saints began to be only Roman Catholic saints we are not in a position to say, for we never have been told; it must have been a long while before the Reformation, as St. Dominic was obviously a Roman Catholic saint, or he would not have founded the Inquisition; so must St. Francis, or he would not have had the stigmata; so must St. Gregory the Great, as he certainly was not Pope without knowing it. But by the time the Reformation arrived the whole business of sanctity had become exclusively Roman Catholic: the reformers would have no more saints and they never have had. The Roman Catholic saints were peculiarly offensive for two reasons: because they were so typically Roman Catholic, and because Roman Catholics worship them. St. Ignatius of Loyola,

St. Francis Xavier, St. Francis Borgia were not only Roman Catholic, they were much worse: they were Jesuits. So were many other post-Reformation saints. St. Charles Borromeo was a cardinal. St. Theresa was a nun, and not even a nun of an "active and useful order"; and so with hundreds of the post-Reformation saints: they were Popes, or Cardinals, or Jesuits, or monks, or nuns, or traffickers with such. In a word, they were deadly Catholic. They were more than typically Catholic, they were the quintessence and sublimation of Catholicity. The Protestants disapprove of them on that very account. Were they immoral? Was their standard low and their practice lax? Was it by reason of their defective virtue that they received the honours of canonisation?

These post-Reformation Roman Catholic saints, if they represent anything, represent the Catholic *ideal of morality* carried into perfect practice. And by their practice anyone who read their lives, and knew nothing else of Catholic standards of morality, might understand what the Catholic standard is. These people realised it. These canonised Popes, like St. Pius V., cardinals like St. Charles, Jesuits like Francis Xavier, nuns like Theresa of Jesus, monks like St. John of God, illustrate in real life what the Roman Catholic Church inculcates as the rule of Christian life to be aimed at. I can understand an Exeter Hall devotee disliking St. Pius V. uncommonly, but I cannot understand any reasonable person rating the morality of an "escaped" monk, with his mouth full of dirt and his eye full of obscene innuendo, higher than that of the austere Dominican.

The post-Reformation saints do not appeal to the reformed taste, because they are too Roman Catholic: is it because the morality of those saints was too low?

Or can it be because it was too high? Common sense must decide. A standard of ethics that prefers Dr. and Mrs. Luther to St. Francis Xavier and St. Theresa, is so eccentric that no sane argument can ever appeal to it, or ever has appealed to it. Any who are capable of venerating the apostate monk and nun must be incapable of appreciating real sanctity. But they are also incapable of recognising a high standard of morals, and the less they talk about morals the better.

The saints are objectionable to these persons not only because they were so typically Roman Catholic—which we admit, but also because Roman Catholics “worship” them. This we do not admit in the sense in which it is meant; and I cannot help thinking it a mistake when we use the word in our sense without insisting on its not being used as our accusers mean it. What these people mean is that we worship the saints as only God can be worshipped. That is nonsense: as much nonsense as it would be to say that we consider the moon hotter than the sun, and starlight more effectual in ripening our crops than sunlight. The moon has no light of her own, but only that reflection of his that the sun lends her. She is much nearer to ourselves than the sun, and we can gaze on her brilliance without being blinded; nevertheless she is not the origin and source of even that lesser light she casts down upon our night; it is only caught by her in the long immensity of space and held there for us. She is the sun’s witness, and without him she would be as dark as ourselves on a moonless night. Without the sun it would be all night for us, and there would be no moon.

What these people can never understand is that our veneration of saints is a perpetual witness to our adoration of God. They are saints because He is God: if



there were no God there would be no saints. Their light is perfect in its kind and degree, lovely and of ineffable purity and serenity, but it is all reflection; in the wild night of sin and human imperfection it compels man to remember that there is God. The world's bulk is between us and Him, but the sanctity of the saints insists on our keeping in mind His existence.

I am disposed to suspect that we are accused of worshipping saints, as only God may be worshipped, because they who bring the accusation have themselves but a poor and mean idea how God should be worshipped. Sacrifice may not be offered to any saint, and these people cannot perceive that the supreme expression of worship is sacrifice. In this the ancient religions of mankind were nobler than they; for, though they were but groping blindly in the dark, they at least were capable of discerning that to give something to their gods was a higher expression of worship than merely to ask something of them. It is true that what they gave was often inadequate and trivial, but it was typically meant; and it is true that some of the moderns who refuse any sacrificial offering say that the only oblation worthy of God is the offering of self. But the Catholic Church has something ineffably higher to offer. Holy Abraham was ready to sacrifice his son, much dearer to him than himself; but he prophesied a greater victim than Isaac, when he said God will provide Himself a Victim: for the morrow of Mount Moriah was the Holy Mass. God Himself provided the Lamb for the sacrifice, and in it is an oblation unspeakably greater than that of ourselves, though that is included, the Man-Christ being sum and representative of all men, for Christ is not only man but God. Those who pretend that the Mass is an

offering unworthy of God are ignorant of what it is, or must believe God to be unworthy of Himself.

Of all things the Mass is the most Roman Catholic—and how little are the saints even mentioned in it. And the saints themselves, if these accusers but knew their lives, how little in all they say and write are they concerned with each other. Was there ever a more Roman Catholic saint than Catherine of Siena, with her ecstasies and her stigmata, her miraculous fasts and her miraculous communions? And is not all her life the breathing of one word, Jesus Christ?

Again, we “worship saints.” Is it because of their lax and low morality? Is not our “worship” of them an irrefragable proof and witness of our veneration of high virtue, our wistful yearning towards the perfection we miss in ourselves, of the value we have for purity and justice and charity and holiness? Of the Church’s desire to point with the fingers of saints towards the ideal Christ sets for us? Has the Church ever canonised anyone of middling piety, of but average goodness? It is a contradiction in terms to pretend at once that Catholics worship saints and condone laxity of morals.

But formless and vague as the accusations all are, one form they take we have alluded to. It is urged that the Catholic Church debilitates the conscience of her children by interposing between it and God human influence and human interference, especially in the practice of the confessional. So I suppose physicians debilitate the constitutions of their patients by interposing untasty medicines, and, unwelcome warnings, between them and their well-loved indulgences and ignoble excesses. There are patients who love their over-eating and over-drinking better than health, and such persons kick at the doctor. But common-

sense recognises that they need him and his purgatives, and his plain threats of what will follow on neglect and disregard. If men were all healthy and all wise there would be no such calling as the physician's.

If we were what we should be, cry these wiseacres, there need be no confessional. Perhaps it was because Jesus Christ perceived that men never had been what they ought to have been, and never would be all they ought to be, that in His Divine condescendence He left to the Church the great sacrament of healing.

It might be very spirited in a doctor to say, "Your sickness is all your own fault, I leave you to yourself. You have no business to be ill. Either you are guilty of excess, or your ancestors were. The human body should be perfectly healthy: your gout, or your debility, is all abnormal—slightly scandalous, my dear sir, or madam, and you should be normal. All illness is more or less abnormal. *Be normal.*"

However spirited such fine talk might sound, it would be dismal hearing for the sick creature inclined to suspect that sickness itself was normal in *him*.

The Catholic Church has to deal with mankind as Adam left it; and her Master knew it, and left her the means. Man is sick and He left her a medicine, and bade her play the part not of preacher only, but of physician too.

*He*, it may be urged, is the Physician. Precisely, and it is *He* who cures in the confessional. The Catholic Church can invent no sacraments: they are all Divine institutions. That which is her claim for them should be their justification. Her assertion that they were all God's invention, not her own, is not an instance of her arrogance, but an illustration of her humility.

The Church could give no man power to bind and loose : Jesus Christ gave it, and that is her point, which invariably escapes her adversaries. Her physicians claim no power of healing by right of their innate or acquired personal skill ; it is a matter of delegation. If God cannot do what an earthly monarch does, and delegate judicial faculties, then there is an end. But it is not irreverent or presumptuous to say that He can.

Does the earthly monarch attenuate morality by appointing courts of justice ? Are judges notorious for encouraging infractions of the law ? There are countries where there are no such courts and no judges ; it is, of course, well known that in them the highest standard of morality prevails. It is equally well known that the confessional is largely absent from Scotland, and from Norway, and I suppose quite an established fact that in those favoured countries the prevalence of illegitimate births is due to the chill of the climate. It is odd that in Catholic Ireland the humidity and softness of the climate should produce a contrary result : odd, but certainly fortunate.

In the confessional the human conscience is supposed, by these people, to be separated by a human barrier from the Divine Lawgiver : thus a bridge separates the opposing banks of a river, and nobody is ever helped by it to pass from one to the other. It is, as has been remarked by a more illustrious writer, odd to note what different results accrue from a mere change of metaphor.

The enemies of the confessional assume that the object of the priest in it is to put himself between the penitent and God ; but, then, they are not in the habit of going to confession. In one breath they thank God that they know nothing about it, and assert that they

know all about it. They have never been inside a house, but they can tell what it is like inside, because they have picked up stones out of the muck outside and flung them at the windows. It is all very logical and very charitable and very superior. But it is not exactly common sense.

When our Lord said that a tree is known by its fruits we presume that these critics of ours believe that He meant it. Well, there are, alas, many Catholics in the whole world who never or seldom do go to confession, as there are, thank God, vast numbers who do. Which of these classes are the more moral, lead the better lives, have the more delicate consciences? Is a delicate conscience a debilitated one? Or is it because the confessional enfeebles the conscience of those Catholics in the habit of frequenting it that their lives are purer, more religious, more charitable and more just than are those of Catholics who never make use of it?

Does the priest in the confessional impose his own conscience on the penitent, and so deprive him of any real conscience of his own? If those who talk so glibly on the subject had as much knowledge and experience of it as they have ignorance, they would be aware that a confessor lays down no private law, but asserts and reasserts the unchanging law of God; and it is precisely because every Catholic knows perfectly that he does so, that bad Catholics, who have no desire or intention of abiding by the law of God, will not trust themselves in the confessional. They know that it is useless to enter there merely to give a historic account of their sins: absolution cannot be obtained without sorrow, and part of that sorrow is a purpose of amendment, and such purpose of amendment includes a resolve to avoid the occasions of relapse. The maligners of the confessional

pretend to believe it an easy way of obtaining licence to sin, or a patent method of getting forgiveness without repentance: the most ignorant Catholic in the world knows fully that without repentance the confessional will do nothing for him. It is not a laxative of conscience, but an astringent.

But the priest absolves, and he is a man; how dare he? Because he is himself sinless, or pretends to be? No, but because God has given him authority to do what only could be done by God's delegation. Jesus Christ said that He gave the power, and delegated the authority: do those who deny the power not believe that He is God? Or do they deny the authenticity of the words? There are no plainer in Scripture; Christ did not in any Scripture more plainly declare His own Godhead than He declared His delegation of the power of binding and loosing. To believe Him and His words in their plain sense is not to despise Scripture; to admit that He could Himself forgive sins is to admit that He was God, to refuse Him the power is to refuse to confess Him God: and if He be God and Almighty, He can delegate any function that He chooses. He said that He did delegate His own authority of binding and loosing. He must have meant something: is it arrogance, is it impiety, to believe that He meant what He said, and that He could do what He said?



# EVERYDAY PAPERS

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## PRESS AND PUBLIC

"MR. DARCY," said Elizabeth Bennet, in *Pride and Prejudice*, "has no defect. He owns it himself without disguise." And the Catholic public, with very little, has lately shown signs of expecting a literature and press free from defect and all to itself. Its novelists must not strain at wit, but must be as funny as Dickens, and equally moving without ever wallowing in pathos or growing maudlin. They must show a complete grasp of life, like Thackeray's, but without hinting at anything in the lives of men that has no business to be there. They must produce works of fiction that may freely be read in convent boarding-schools, but of a quality that will force men of a world not Catholic to read them, that so the Catholic presentment of things may reach outside. They are therefore not to be goody-goody, but the whiteness of holiness must by no means be thrown into relief by any contrast with anything darker than pale grey—a lofty standard, not, perhaps, to be obtained, as you may obtain a new fish-kettle, by ordering it at the stores or from the nearest ironmonger.

As a matter of fact, however, the standard actually reached by English writers belonging to the Church has been for some time a high one. At the present moment they may claim a position not merely proportionally good, but high even without the proviso of relative numbers considered.

Dr. Barry, Canon Sheehan, Monsignor Benson, Katherine Tynan, Mrs. Hugh Fraser, and Mrs. Wilfrid Ward are certainly not inferior to any English novelist now writing; and Canon Barry's contributions to literature are not confined to fiction. Francis Thomson, dying, left no poet greater than himself in England alive and still writing poetry; and at the present moment Lord Alfred Douglas and Mrs. Meynell are the best poets England has living. Abbot Gasquet, the Rev. H. K. Mann, and Monsignor Ward are the best historians now writing in English; and in the neighbour field of serious biography Mr. Wilfrid Ward and Mr. Snead-Cox are ahead of all competitors. Of living essayists, few surpass Mr. Hilaire Belloc in brilliance and originality.

If we come to periodical literature it may fairly be said that the *Dublin Review* is the best of the quarterlies, and no shilling monthly maintains a higher level of interest, excellence, and literary distinction than the *Month*.

Then there is the "Press." This also must be a branch of literature, or the mission entrusted to it can never be seriously carried out. In the non-Catholic Press there are papers that by no stretch of courtesy could be ranked as falling within any definition of literature; all printed words, indeed, are composed of letters; but they have nothing else to do with letters. The *Tablet* is a literary organ of very high standing; not now equalled in consistent excellence, nor in importance, by weekly reviews that were once names to conjure with. The *Catholic Times* appeals to a large public, not, in all its ramifications, so literary; but, besides its popular features, it also is distinguished by the generous weekly provision of a mass of very con-

siderable and very able literary matter. In this place<sup>1</sup> it does not behove me to speak of the *Universe*, but this may be said: Whatever degree of excellence it may have attained so far, it aims at bringing itself higher; concerning which something must presently be enforced.

The Catholic public, like the general public, is formed of various groups or sections—in these democratic days we must not say, of classes—and to these diverse groups the different Catholic newspapers appeal, so that they have never regarded each other as rivals. The divisions are not precisely political. Some Catholic reviews, magazines, and newspapers may probably circulate chiefly in quarters where Conservatives are not held in derision, others among those who are most sanguine as to the benefits promised by Liberal Governments; but it has never been the way with the Catholic Press in England to attach to itself this or that political label. And this is altogether to its credit, and much to its advantage—even politically. No Liberal administration can count on the blind obedience of any English Catholic newspaper—let it put forward an Education Bill obnoxious to Catholic feeling, and try—nor can a Conservative Government be sure that any English Catholic review will whisper soft nothings in its ear on all occasions.

This attitude of our Press has been its strong point. Let us maintain it.

In some quarters lately I have noted with regret a disposition to assume that every good Catholic must be a good Democrat. Against any such assumption, little as I like politics of any colour, I take leave to protest. In matters that are really only political the Church leaves us a free hand. There are, of course,

<sup>1</sup> The present paper appeared in the *Universe*.

questions that claim to be merely political in which there is strictly involved some deeper question of faith or morals. In those we are not free, for the Church has never professed to leave her children free to believe what is mischievous and false, nor to behave without reference to God's commandments and her own. In matters of political significance only, she holds herself unbound, and does not bind us, neither must we try to bind one another.

Democracy may be the thing now; it certainly was not the thing always, and the Church was there all the time. Christendom was almost wholly feudal once, and the Church made the best of it. The world may be entirely democratic soon, and the Church will make the best of that, too. The old heathen empire crumbled and passed, and slowly out of its ruins arose the feudal Christendom. Feudalism passed, and Christendom with it, modern Europe emerging, her mouth full of promises of freedom. The world may keep them, and all be one democracy, but the world itself will pass, and, before it passes, something else may grow out of the ruins of democracy, just as democracy itself arose out of the ruins of monarchy. The Church stands, as she has always stood, watchful, not aloof, but uncompromised, a finger on her lip, blessing where she can, expostulating when she must.

The Church has had from the beginning a side that democrats love to call democratic. She has never existed for any class; she belongs to all alike who belong to her. Her sympathy has been always for those most in need of it, and there have been times when that sympathy has called for the reproof of the mighty. All that she has to give is, for poor and rich alike. And her highest places are open to the lowest.

But her organisation is anything rather than democratic; it is not based on assumptions of equality. Her rule is for the people—not this section or that, highest or even lowest—it has never been, and never can be, by the people. Her constitution reflects that of heaven, and, though one hears God called by many odd names nowadays, I have not yet heard Him described as President of the Celestial Republic. Whatever happens to the Government of the world, that of the Church will always be a Viceroyalty, the reminder in time of Eternal Sovereignty.

The Voice that speaks from the Seven Hills beside the yellow river has sent its sound into all lands, insisting on the Apostolate of the Press, and every Catholic ear is listening. But the message cannot, in the nature of things, be to the Christian Press alone; it implies the correspondence of the Christian public. A duty is never, like the Leaning Tower of Pisa, all on one side.

Political nostrums change and fail, but the law of demand and supply will work in spite of us. Forced feeding is not possible outside prisons, and readers are at large. The Apostolate of the Catholic Press depends not on the Catholic Press alone, but on the reasonable co-operation of the Catholic public. And that is precisely what the Catholic public does not seem alert to comprehend. A Press, however solidly good, cannot maintain itself in vogue by its own weight.\* Writers presuppose readers. That the Catholic writers are there we believe is proved. Let the Catholic readers keep them going. The Pope's wise and solemn reminder of an imperious duty is to the public on which every Press must depend, as it is to those by whom the Catholic Press must be provided.

## ON BOOK BUYING

IN the previous paper I spoke of the correspondence necessary on the part of the Catholic public if the Apostolate of the Press is to be as effectual as the Sovereign Pontiff wishes it to be. Recently Miss Lucy Curd, in an interesting article, wrote in the *Universe* of the Apostolate of Fiction. In that matter also the Catholic public has its part to play. And, though it may not seem pretty in a writer known principally as a contributor to fiction, to urge the point, it is my intention briefly to do so.

There is no doubt that Catholic novelists would obtain far larger audiences if they were content to write what may be called non-Catholic novels; and the labourer in the field of fiction is as worthy of his hire as any other worker. But they are willing to forego larger hire that their work may be in a special corner of the great field of letters. In other words, they are content with restricted payment of their toil in order that they may help in the supply of a Catholic literature of fiction. Nor is their self-denial merely in the matter of pecuniary rewards; every writer desires to have as many readers as possible, and most writers find that the wider their audience is the greater is the stimulus to good writing. A novelist labelled in the public estimation as Catholic must be content to know that ninety-nine out of every hundred novel-readers in England will abstain from putting his or her books down upon their library-list.

It does seem, therefore, that Catholic novel-writers have some right to complain if they find themselves also unsupported, or very weakly supported, by Catholic novel-readers.

But, first, as to the buying of books.

There is nothing, it seems to me, in which people are more careful of their money; and I do not mean Catholic people particularly. You will find those who can afford almost every other kind of expenditure too poor, in their own estimation, to spend anything on books.

There are, of course, a few wealthy persons who lay out large sums on books, as they lay out large sums on pictures, old furniture, miniatures, gold snuff-boxes, fans, and china. But the amount spent even by them on books is very small indeed in comparison of what they lavish on the purchase of other things. And they do not buy books to read them. They are merely collectors; and it is the desire of possession that makes them purchasers, which has nothing at all to do with the love of reading or of literature.

It is not of such people we are speaking. Nor of the much larger class who care neither to collect rare books nor to read books of any sort. There is another class, numerous also, that likes reading pretty well, and does read to a certain extent, but will on no account buy the books it wants to read. Not all of these people are poor; some of them are wealthy, and deny themselves in very little. In books they practise their economies.

Some new book appears, which they imagine they want to read, and to read soon, while other people are talking of it. It costs a good deal less than a smart hat, less in most instances than a theatre-ticket, perhaps



as little as a cab-fare, nothing like what it would cost to fill a bowl with flowers or a dish with asparagus. Do they buy it? They would stare with amazement if you suggested such an extravagance. The book may be worth reading again and again; it may outlast the fashion of twenty hats; it does not wither like the lovely flowers, or get eaten up like the asparagus; but to buy it would be the road to ruin.

Against many books much may be urged, but the buying of books has led few to financial embarrassment.

A lady, not indeed wealthy, poor thing, but struggling along on six thousand a year of her own, independent of her husband's separate thousands, remarked lately to a writer of novels:

"I like to *have* your books, not only to read them."

She liked, she explained, to read them often. What could be more flattering?

"And," she went on, "I always *do* get them. I wait till I can get them from Boots' for ninepence." The author could not but wish she might have to wait long, but he was constrained in justice to commend her:

"You are," he said, "one of the few book-buyers, and deserve great praise."

People like to be given books by their writers. To the same author the same lady in straitened circumstances, once wrote, shortly before Christmas:

"Do not buy me a present" (he had not meant to); "send me your last book."

Of course, he did; and it only cost him three shillings and fourpence, whereas it would have cost her four-and-six.

"Ah!" I have heard rich folk say—really rich folk,

not anxious strivers how to make ends meet on six or seven thousand a year—"Ah! I see you have ——'s last book, from Mudie. We belong to ——'s, and can't get it. Don't send it back till I've read it. I like his books better than any that one reads now."

If rich people cannot afford to buy books, how can you expect poor people to buy them? I do not. One must not count on uncovenanted mercies. All the same, it is chiefly poorish people who do buy the few that are bought; unfashionable folk in country-houses, whose inhabitants can no longer afford annual visits to London, and much poorer people still.

A man of letters, who was also "literary adviser" to a firm of London publishers, once took me on his way to worship at the shrine of Mr. Thomas Hardy, and, after showing him the neighbouring dens in which literary lions had once lived, I hospitably entertained him to tea at the expense of a spinster-poetess who had about sixty pounds a year.

"Good gracious," he exclaimed as we came away; "that lady *buys* books. Her cottage is full of them." She did not happen to be a Catholic, but I daresay Catholics buy as many books as other people. But, leaving the question of downright purchase aside, there is the other way of supporting Catholic writers, viz. by demanding their books at libraries, and continuing to demand them till the books are supplied; and in this matter I think Catholic readers are backward. They are apt, it seems to me, to ask for the work of a Catholic author as if they knew they were asking a favour at the hands of their librarian; and librarians never make haste to get books asked for in that way. They would never get any book if they could help it. They regard *all* books as mole-catchers regard moles—

tiresome things by the extermination of which they live. Nevertheless, the man who pays the mole-catcher expects a certain number of moles to be forthcoming; and the librarian knows that his besotted clients will have certain books, but he will never let them have any he can help letting them have. If a Catholic subscriber asks meekly for a work by a Catholic writer, the librarian will boldly aver it is not yet out; if it be urged that the work has been in circulation some time, he will say, "Oh yes! Ah! *That* book. Oh yes; that book's about finished. A 'Remainder' by now, I expect." This is not *odium theologicum* (though I think almost all librarians are Congregationalists); it is merely hatred of books. And if you show boldly that you know you have a right to choose your own reading, and that you simply *mean* to have the book you mention, it will be there in a day or two.

## OF DISLIKE OF BOOKS

WE have all heard of the man who confessed that he only knew two tunes when he heard them, of which one was *God Save the King*, and the other wasn't. I only once met anyone who went further, and admitted that he disliked music; but there must be many who do dislike it, such tunes as the happily defunct "Ta-ra-ra-Boom-de-ay" could not have been so widely beloved, else.

No one frankly declares that he cannot abide books, nevertheless it is obvious that many do.

They prove it by their reading.

I am sure one way of disliking books is to like newspapers. There are, I know, papers which are a sort of books. No one would deny that the *Dublin Review* is a book, a different book appearing under the same title four times a year; so is the *Month* a book, with twelve slim but stalwart volumes a year; because the *Dublin* and the *Month* are literature. A paper that frankly aims at being literary is also a book, though its shape be not bookish, and it appears every week. But there are papers that are no more books than Christian Science is Christianity or Science; for they have nothing to do with literature. They are not with it but against it. They gather not with it, but scatter. And the more a man, or a boy or a girl, reads them, the less capable does he, or she, become of reading. They may not be bad morally,

though the burden of proof that they are in any way good lies on them. They are certainly not good from the literary point of view, for the reason just given; they destroy a sound stomach, and ruin anything like a literary digestion. A man who fills himself with sweet cakes, overlaid with chalky sugar, has no appetite for good meat.

They are made of snips and shreds, and full of information that is curious only in the sense of being inquisitive. They are equally inquisitive concerning criminals and crowned heads. What the Czar has for breakfast every day, what the murderer hanged to-day had for breakfast this morning, is equally their concern; what costume was worn in the dock by the woman arraigned for the poisoning of her husband, and what costume the Queen of Bulgaria had on when she "sustained an accident in her motor car" is described with the same gusto. The Liberty of the Press is understood by them to mean the taking of astounding liberties — against taste, decency, even humanity.

Some time ago, a very kindly man of letters delivered himself of a philippic against capital punishment; but all he wrote was no more than an indictment of the indecent morbidity of a press that makes each successive murderer its hero, from the moment his crime is attributed to him, to the moment in which he pays the penalty it has brought upon him. The scandal is not that a murderer should know that he will, if convicted, have to suffer justly what he has made another suffer, unjustly, but that he should be aware, and the public should be aware, that every inflection of his voice, every feature in his face, the cut of his trousers, the spots on his waistcoat, his tie-pin, and his tie, the colour

of the pencil with which he writes notes to his counsel, the significant twist of his lips, the pregnant droop in his left eyebrow, that all this, and a thousand particulars other than all this, will be noted down, and telegraphed all over the world, and read by hundreds of millions of morbid creatures who can see no difference between such obscene publicity and fame. Not even fact, for even a ring or an albert-chain are facts of a sort—brazen facts sometimes—suffices the spreaders of these foul Barmecide feasts; countless inferences are drawn or suggested; nothing in a loathsome murderer, no episode in his wretched life, no jest of his, is let slip by unnoted. The waxed ends of his moustache are as important as the colour of Oliver Cromwell's hair.

The more such ghoulish filth is savoured the less does it become possible that those who savour it can like books, and they who provide it are the worst enemies of reading.

It may seem an anti-climax to say so, when they are also the worst enemies of public morality. For it is all glorification of crime, whatever they may think of themselves, who deal in the stuff. Criminals are not normally healthy-minded persons, and they are recruited from the morbid, who gloat on every circumstance of crime. The class of which murderers are made is the class that has learned to see in murder the one sure road to instant and universal notoriety. Decadent lads and girls "educated," God save the mark, in ignorance of God, perceive that without work, without capacity, without any of the self-denying, toilsome climbing that has led the famous to fame, they, too, in the last desperate collapse of infamy, may secure a notice, a world-wide publicity, that cannot be

without its poisonous charm to those who, beyond life, see nothing, and in life see only leaden failure.

Against this prostitution of print every decent paper that strives to be a book is a protest, as every good man's life is a protest against the mean cry that goodness is beyond our mark, and, as things are, impossible. The use of monks is not *only* in their prayers; the life of perfection, however hidden, forces the reluctant world to remember that the Councils of Perfection are not Councils of Impossibility. And the goodness of a good paper is not merely a refusal to avail itself of the profits of prostitution, but an insistence on the fact that goodness can and does exist in print, however hidden behind the flaunting crowd of vulgar truckling to vulgar and mean tastes. Just as the monk in his cell proves that there can be Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, so does the paper prove it that prefers poverty to a wealth gained by appeal to what is basest in those who have learned to read, that will not sell legally translated pornography, nor forget that the ultimate Censor of a Christian Press is the imprisoned Head of the Church of Christ.

There is many a man who says, honestly and truly, that he cannot be, that, at all events, he is not, as are holy monks and nuns in their heavenly cloister, but he can and will help a work above himself, and so he spares them a coin or so out of his superfluities, and knows himself blest, for a pipe foregone, or a pleasure abdicated, that he may send help to build a convent, or a chapel of some monastery. Let him aid by his support and subscription an undertaking that depends on him. Every man who spares his penny to buy a Catholic paper is helping the utterance of clean words: doing his share in the work of a great mis-

sionary enterprise: helping the Voice that teaches from the Seven Hills to come at the ears to which it speaks. A penny is not much, nor was the widow's mite, nor was the cup of cold water—but, alas! cold water is not wont to be given in cupfuls, but rather to be poured out of buckets.



## ATMOSPHERE AND ANTIDOTE

IN a former paper we spoke of the buying, or rather the non-buying, of books. Let us return to the previous question—the buying, or, to be more matter of fact, the non-buying, of newspapers: meaning here, of Catholic newspapers.

Though there are many who cannot plead poverty as the true reason for their extreme unwillingness to buy books, since they habitually buy much more costly and less necessary things, it may be truly urged by many others that they do not buy books simply because they cannot, because they have not the means. And they may also plead with truth that they cannot even afford the luxury of a library-subscription, though it remains the case that numbers, who afford themselves indulgences more expensive and more useless, imagine themselves too poor to spend a guinea, or half a guinea, a year on this.

But who pretends that he cannot buy a newspaper? Everybody does buy newspapers; and Catholics buy as many as their neighbours; and—this is our grievance—they are given to buy precisely the newspapers bought by their non-Catholic neighbours, and to buy them only. In England, Catholic papers are only a weekly matter, yet those who every day buy at least one non-Catholic paper, and often several others as well, do not recognise it as a duty to buy a Catholic paper even once in a week.

But to do so is, in fact, nothing less than a duty. In every Catholic family that can provide itself with a daily non-Catholic paper, and usually provides itself with at least one weekly non-Catholic paper—sporting, comic, or what not besides—it is a simple duty that a Catholic paper should be provided also. It is merely a matter of a penny, and the expense is not the real obstacle.

Catholics in a country like England are bound to bear in mind that the atmosphere they breathe is not Catholic. The ordinary intercourse of business and of recreation brings them in lifelong contact with people who believe altogether differently from themselves, or who believe, only too probably, nothing in particular. The tone of conversation at its best is un-Catholic; the principles vital to us are not held by those with whom we are in daily intimate communication. The Church, to large numbers of them, stands for obsolete, exploded ideas; of the teaching of the Church they are probably densely ignorant; such as they imagine it to be, they dislike it; and they impatiently await the day when that teaching shall be universally forgotten and unheeded. To be subject to it they assume to be a fetter, a drawback on freedom, a handicap, as it is called, in life. And they are not averse from assuming also, that their Catholic friends are conscious of this, though unavowedly; that they would like to be more “free” in opinion, less subject to rule and guidance, and that either Catholics do not really give all the inward submission they seem to give, or that they would be glad to emancipate themselves from it.

They assume, often quite innocently, that their Catholic intimates do really regard all the matters of daily life from their own standpoint; and talk accord-

ingly. It may happen, and must often happen, that they who thus take their own non-Catholic, non-believing point of view for granted, are older, more experienced, perhaps cleverer, perhaps better-instructed, than the Catholics who listen to them.

Every Catholic in England outside a monastery is subject to this kind of influence; and in a country like England it must be so. It would not be possible, were it desirable, for Catholics to forswear non-Catholic society in every class of life, from the cradle to the grave. Catholics in England are bound to be in constant relation of business or pleasure with those who live in an atmosphere alien to the Catholic ideal.

Books are an influential sort of companion, and if Catholics read chiefly Catholic books, such reading would, as far as it went, provide a certain corrective. But Catholics, we believe, are not so disposed. And there are immense numbers of Catholics, as there are of non-Catholics, who read few books of any sort. They are just the sort who read newspapers.

And non-Catholic newspapers are like non-Catholic people; they exercise something of the same kind of inevitable influence; and it is, as it must be, non-Catholic. It is not, as a rule, the *rôle* of secular newspapers to indulge in plain abuse of the Catholic Church; religion is not, in any shape, their preoccupation. But they are written by men who do not believe in the Church, or greatly like her; who are apt to suspect her, and are willing to despise her; who regard her as an incubus on modern thought, and even on modern society, as a quaint and not unpicturesque relic of the Middle Ages, useful for occasional purple patches of copy, but tiresome too, wrong-headed, perverse, narrow, dictatorial, scheming, the enemy of modern man.

On the whole, they ignore her; and a Catholic who should read nothing but secular papers might run some risk of ignoring her too, as an element in daily life. If he goes to Mass he will be reminded of her, no doubt, but only, as it were, in church, not in the street, nor at home, nor on his way to his work and from it.

Of the Church in his own land he will hear very little indeed from his daily paper; often, nothing at all for weeks together. But the Church is Catholic, and her life is not lived in England alone; of her doings and her sufferings abroad he will learn still less, and that little is almost always falsely coloured. Odd and portentous would be the misconceptions of a Catholic as to the events of the last few years in Italy, France, Portugal, or Spain, as they concerned the Catholic Church, if his knowledge of them were derived from the secular press of England. And what other notion of them *can* he have if he will not, even once a week, turn to a Catholic paper and learn the truth?

It is not merely that non-Catholic papers give but a meagre presentment of foreign affairs as concerning the Church; the presentment is not only stunted, it is unjust and misleading. Those who send over to the non-Catholic press in England their accounts of matters concerning the Church in foreign countries, such as Portugal, France, Spain, and Italy, neither desire to accord to such matters their due importance nor to permit English readers to arrive at a just view in reference to them. It is their aim to make what is really anti-Christian appear merely anti-clerical. Their axiom is that the Pope must be wrong, and in the cipher of that axiom every despatch concerning him and his Church is written. The English being

addicted to liberty, every struggle on the part of the Vatican and the Church to secure freedom of Christian conscience and worship in Portugal, or France, or Italy, or Spain, is represented as an onslaught on liberty; every attempt to ward off the fetters of militant atheism is made to look like a desperate effort to bind fast the shackles of intolerant bigotry. Into this pit of misconception Catholics who will not read Catholic newspapers fling themselves with deliberate indolence, or they sit on the brink, and have only themselves to thank if it crumbles and lets them in.

In home affairs, too, the Catholic who will not read a Catholic paper, condemns himself to much inevitable ignorance in matters which concern his most vital interest. Semi-political affairs often involve such questions, and Catholic pulpits are not perpetually resounding, like Nonconformist pulpits, with even semi-political matters. Concerning the evils of Socialism, concerning the obligation of securing at every cost, Catholic education for Catholic children, the Catholic who eschews Catholic newspapers must remain a good deal in the dark, and will probably acquire, what is so easily acquired, a fine equipment of ignorance; especially as the Catholic who only hears Mass once a week, is often fond of choosing a Mass where there is no sermon.

Again: Catholics in such a country as ours suffer from a certain religious isolation, and particularly in the case of those who do not live at home, who earn their living at a distance from their families, and live, perhaps, in lodgings, or board in some non-Catholic household. This sort of religious isolation is much corrected by the habitual reading of a Catholic newspaper, which brings before the memory and mind what

Catholics are caring about, what they are doing, what they may be suffering, what their special preoccupations, needs, and objects of the moment, are. Such reading destroys indifference, and a kind of religious selfishness and narrowness. It creates Catholic sympathy and warms it, fosters devotion to Catholic causes, and deepens loyalty to the Church and her August Head.

## ON SITTING STILL

THE present writer used to know a Cistercian monk who was extremely amusing. It is not implied that he diverted the monastery with funny gestures, but he had occasion to speak sometimes, and when he spoke it was his custom to be at once witty and sage—almost the same thing in the undegenerate sense of these words, for a wit need not be precisely a cracker of jokes, and a sage was not originally a chartered bore.

Occasionally this delightful monk was sent by his abbot to do duty in the chapel attached to a certain large country-house. Even there he kept his rule, so far as was possible; but in such circumstances the rule of silence did not apply, and what he said was generally worth remembering.

There was in that house a very devout person of whose goodness he had, I am sure, a great opinion; all the same, he thought she dashed about too much—always in pursuit of good works.

“You should try and learn,” he observed mildly, “the ABC of spirituality.”

“What is the ABC of spirituality?” she inquired meekly.

“Sitting still.”

Long afterwards I knew an American lady who had never heard this advice of the Cistercian, but acted on it.

“My rule,” she explained, “is never to walk when I

can ride, and never to ride if I can drive, and never to drive if I can sit still."

"And what," demanded her brother severely, "do you suppose your legs were given you for?"

"To balance myself with when I do sit still," she replied serenely.

That, of course, is going very far. But it seems to me that the habit of sitting still is almost a lost art, and that the loss of it is a misfortune to society—I do not mean to societies; they mostly imply running about. It is my impression that society is also losing the art of reading; and the two losses are not unconnected with each other.

To read involves sitting still, and that is what people can less and less abide doing. Nobody is ever anywhere now if he or she can possibly be anywhere else. Least of all can anybody abide stopping at home. Houses are more dressed up than they used to be, more luxurious, and more smart; but that is to receive other people in them; their owners have not the least idea of staying in them themselves. So that they become less and less homes. When people are *At Home*, it is in some hotel; their homes, or flats, are not homes, but places whither they return to get clean linen, and leave behind the linen that is clean no longer. They are a sort of box-rooms, or left-luggage-office; that is all.

Hard-worked husbands have to sleep in their own houses, on certain nights of the week; but only the very abject stay in them from Friday afternoon to Monday. This lovely custom has given us the lovely new word, "week-end."

Week-end folk are sure to dislike reading; and printed matter suitable to those who do dislike it is



piled upon the railway book-stalls, Some of this stuff is called magazines, though only two real magazines survive for the general, *i.e.* non-Catholic, public. The week-end in his railway carriage is embedded in printed matter, and one glance at it is enough to show you he is confirming himself in a rooted habit of dislike of books.

Of course, week-enders who are better off eschew trains, and are wafted somewhere else in motors or on motor-cycles; and those who are worse off fly from the bosoms of their families on bicycles. But if they do not take with them a cargo of printed (and illustrated) matter of the kind that no one can bear to read who can bear also to read real books, they are merely in the position of those who are saved from eating amiss by eating nothing at all.

A public which simply cannot sit still is precisely the public for which the sort of novels now written are good enough. The less they resemble literature, the more likely are they to find readers. For the novelist whose aim is popularity (and profit) has to appeal not to the love of literature, but to a wide distaste for it.

Publishers are quite aware of this, and take their measures accordingly. Their business is not literature, but to sell things made up as books to the illiterate. No doubt they would say, and many of them would say quite sincerely, "If a Sir Walter Scott were to 'come along,' or a Jane Austen, we should be only too pleased to publish them." It is not pretended that we have among us unpublished Scotts or Austens; but if we had, and if they found their publishers, I, for one, do not believe that they would leap into fame and popularity. Can anyone believe that Miss Austen, Miss Edgeworth, and Miss Burney would achieve now the

quick recognition that was theirs when they began to give their works to the world?

It is not only that the ground is choked up with rubbish, but that the public has vitiated its taste.

About everything classic there is a certain serenity; whether it be in the realms of art—painting, or sculpture, or architecture—or in those of music and of letters. This serenity is intolerable to a people that cannot abide to sit still. Post-Impressionists and Futurists have arrived at the only possible moment for them; had they endeavoured to turn up in the ages of the great masters we know well what would have happened to them. Is serenity much more apparent in the works of modern sculptors? They durst not attempt it, lest they should be dull.

There are some living novelists who would seem to have powers that are not slight, and who nevertheless "sell." But not because they make the real best of those powers; rather because they secure themselves a public by enshrining in each new work some new phase of evanescent, contemporary idiosyncrasy. Thus they sell largely for the moment; but it will be seen that they will not be read when the fads and follies of their moment shall have fallen stale. They can never be classical, because they appeal to what is temporary, and will soon be old-fashioned.

My old Cistercian friend thought true spirituality incompatible with an incapacity to sit still, because in the most active spirituality there must be a contemplative element, else benevolence will always be no more than a fussy philanthropy, and will never have the inward quality of Christian charity.

I am quite sure that the love of books and the hatred of sitting still cannot exist together, and I suspect that

my wise Cistercian would say that, in a people that has learned to read at all, the reading of books that are real books is a part of spiritual life. And I do not believe he would count among good books only those that treat expressly of religion.

## DIABOLICAL TREES

OF Libraries there are several sorts: what we may call Great Libraries, as that of the Vatican, the Bodleian at Oxford, and that of the British Museum, for instances; Public Libraries, of the municipal sort; the libraries of private houses, some of which might also well be called Great Libraries, as Lord Derby's at Knowsley, to mention only one; and Lending Libraries.

With these last we may concern ourselves first.

"In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop," said Sir Anthony Absolute, "I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library! She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes with marble covers! From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress."

"Those are vile places, indeed!" said the lady.

"Madam, a circulating library in a town is an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge! It blossoms through the year! And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last."

"Fy, fy, Sir Anthony! You surely speak laconically."

A hundred and thirty-seven years have gone by since Sir Anthony Absolute delivered this weighty judgment, and his "evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge" is flourishing still. Some of its leaves deserve all his condemnation, not "laconically," but in sober and

righteous earnest. For, in the region of fiction alone, there is every year a large output of what is really bad and unwholesome, and much more that is worthless: and all of it finds its way to the shelves of the lending libraries. Many take out these books because they like them; but many more take them partly out of ignorance of the nature of their contents, and partly because they do not know what else to take. The books are on the "new" shelf; they look clean (which in fact they often are not); and a library subscriber has no idea of going off empty-handed. She wants something for her money; and she wants something to read: and not one library subscriber out of a hundred ever dreams of *buying* books, so there is little, or even nothing, at home to read. Thus, utterly worthless books, or absolutely bad books, find readers not only among those whose taste is perversely bad, but among those who have scarcely any taste, good or bad, to start with, but who end by acquiring a debauched taste, largely out of idleness or hurry.

Lydia Bennet, in *Pride and Prejudice*, did not think her new bonnet very pretty, but thought she might as well buy it as not, and vowed there were two or three much uglier in the shop.

So a good many modern Lydias might candidly confess that the new book they had borrowed was not very pretty, but they thought they might as well borrow it as not, and assure us with perfect truth that there were two or three much uglier in the shop.

With all their faults, and they are not few, Lending Libraries are here; and they have come, like some cheap watches across the Atlantic, to stop. Nor, though we may be keenly alive to their abuse, can we deplore their existence. All who love reading themselves want

others to read, and they are quite aware that it is out of libraries that most people do read.

Now it seems to me that Catholics might easily do a very good and practical work in this matter. They also subscribe to libraries, and each of them could effectually influence the quality of the books on the shelves of his or her local library. One way, which may appear the most obvious, would be by exclusion. I mean by plainly protesting against certain books: and in many cases this might really be done with more effect than would be believed by those who have never tried. All the same, it is not on that obvious-seeming method that special insistence is laid here. The effect would largely depend on the librarian's opinion of the objector: where he happened to think the objector altogether prudish, narrow-minded, or of little authority in bookish matters, he would not attach great weight to objections, and he might have this opinion of the objector quite fairly, as he might have it quite unfairly. But librarians are much in the habit of quoting local opinions on books; and, if you return a book, or refuse it, with a strong but well-advised condemnation of book or author, the chances are you will be quoted if the librarian believes you know what you are talking about.

"Mr. Blank says it's rubbish. Mrs. Dash simply couldn't get through it. Miss Asterisks found it a sleeping-draught. Lady Smith couldn't stand the vulgarity. Sir John won't have any of her books—he hates middle-class high-life." All these dicta one hears, especially the last two, for in these democratic days we all have titles, and none of us are middle-class. To be thought middle-class is what no courage can face.

I knew a spiritual director once who was tormented by a lady's-maid with scruples. In vain he essayed

every remedy suggested by a wide and deep acquaintance with the best mystical writers. At last, in desperation, he hinted that scruples were middle-class, and the lady's-maid suffered no more. Nor did he.

If it is not with works of fiction that the objection has to do, but with such works of pseudo-science as are to be seen on lending-library shelves, the expression of adverse opinion should be differently phrased. Such books, as the librarians themselves confess, like too attractive step-daughters of too youthful step-mothers, "are not much taken out."

But some subscriber with a pretty taste in Agnosticism orders them; and some other subscribers, not averse from being esteemed intellectual, handle them dubiously, with a temporarily mortified longing for Miss Corelli; and hesitate.

"Ah!" observes the Librarian, "*The Origin of Life*, by Professor Thickness. Yes. A New book? Oh, yes! But *quite Mid-Victorian*, I understand." Poor Professor Thickness! Upside down, in the Inferno of Mid-Victorianism, he goes back to the shelf, the ill-lit shelf in the draughty corner away from the stove, where the Memoirs of General Sir T. Duffin, K.C.B., and the Recollections of a Consul at Five Ports, bide a while till, like Lady Clara Vere de Vere, they return to town. And the terrified intellectualist turns with relief to "Hall Caine's Last": with the feelings of a chicken aware of having providentially been saved from an attack of the gapes.

But they are *there*, look you: the Memoirs of nothing memorable, the Recollections of nobody in particular, and the rest of them: not cheap books either. They are there because someone ordered them; and you yourself might have ordered much better books. Apart

from fiction altogether there are a great number of really excellent Catholic books, history, biography, and the like, which would be there if you ordered them, and did it as though you meant it. If they were there they would be read by many who are not Catholics, and who would thus learn a great deal about the Church. In this matter Catholics are somewhat backward: perhaps out of a sort of shyness and modesty. But it is really false modesty. Catholic library-subscribers have as good a right to confront other subscribers with Catholic books upon their library shelves, as non-Catholic subscribers or anti-Catholic subscribers have to confront Catholics there with non-Catholic or anti-Catholic books.



## FOOTNOTES

THE late Bishop Paterson, of Emmaus and Chelsea, used to say that there is a sort of pulpit eloquence that keeps you with one leg in the air. "When we behold the trees in spring dress themselves anew in all their green bravery: when we hear the lark pour down her song from heaven's gate, or near it; when we smell the fragrance of a million blossoms borne on the summer breezes from a thousand fields; and when, my brethren, the harvest gilds the upland. But . . ."

It seems to me that these papers of mine are in a similar predicament. I lift the leg of introduction, and, before I can set it down again on my conclusion, my allotted space is full, and, without room for more than a nod of parting, I must be gone. It is like a game of chess with an elaborate opening, and then not so much checkmate as a hasty pushing of all my pieces back into their box.

They seem, these papers, a series of parentheses, each longer than the statement that embraces it. This is hard on a writer who abhors haste, and loves elbow-room: but it cannot be helped, and he can but hope that whoever reads him will charitably understand that he is himself as much disconcerted as anyone could be by this sort of interjectional literary gasping, or hiccough. Above all things, he trusts that no one will take this gulping method as suggesting a model: let it serve merely as a warning.

In their proper place, parentheses are useful creatures, and, at their worst, they are less intolerable than footnotes. Footnotes are the curse of history. They are pestilent excrescences on erudition, and stumbling-blocks in the path of readers who are not erudite, and want to get on.

Everybody does not read history to cram for an examination; one of the consolations of declining life is that examinations are done with, except the great and final one which is not competitive; and we are at liberty to read history for pleasure, just as we read comic papers lest our ebullient spirits should carry us too far in liveliness.

But the pleasure a good history-book should yield us is often spoiled by these footnotes. They catch us by the heels and forbid our pushing on. A novelist who should so interrupt his readers would never be read, and there is no particular reason why history should weight itself thus, as if in dread of being too readable and too light. Even Thackeray would not have dared to plunge his readers to the bottom of his page that they might learn his reasons for believing Amelia to have been Mr. Sedley's only daughter, or Sir Pitt Crawley to have been a baronet. Dickens assures us that Mr. Weller's knowledge of London was extensive and peculiar; he does not drag us down into small-print proof of it, or enumerate, in a note that undermines two following pages, all the parts of the metropolis familiarly known to that engaging young man.

Are historians afraid of being easier reading than *Vanity Fair* or *Pickwick*? Do they do it to teach us our place? "I'll learn you to be a toad!" said the boy. "We'll learn you to think yourselves capable of

enjoying the ripe fruit of our labours!" mutter the historians, and, flinging their tentacles about our necks, they suck us down, like so many octopuses, into chill mirk of unfathomable notes of an outrageous specific density.

Of course, you may skip the notes altogether; and it will be well for you if you are able. You will learn much more quickly; just as you will learn French or Italian much more quickly if you lock up your dictionary somewhere, and lose the key, and read on pleasantly without one.

But there are people who can no more skip in any book they want to read than they can read a problem-novel. I am one. I have often tried to ignore the fifty lines of austere print at the foot of a page, and read only the blander, mellower three lines of big type at the top; it is no good. Ten pages further on those unread lines still vex, and no resolution can stand against the temptation to turn back. Till the notes have been read the text is read in an absent-minded haze. But I hate the man who wrote them.

Were they after-thoughts? Are they parentheses? In either case they are a plague and nuisance where they are.

If they are second thoughts, the author should not have been in such a hurry at first. If they are parentheses, he should have English enough to be able to manœuvre a parenthesis without losing his way in his sentence.

Perhaps they are sometimes a sort of false conscience: the author is afraid of being believed too implicitly, or so determined to be believed that he thrusts you down into his authorities, and dances on you. That is all very well for him, but rather dull for you.

As the poet sang in the village epitaph :

“ Poor Martha Anne is gone to rest,  
Her place is now on Abram's breast.  
Glory and grace for Martha Anne ;  
It's hardish tho', on Abraham.”

There should be more give and take between author and reader, and more confidence. If I could not believe my author without a crack on the head with a footnote, six hundred footnotes would not make me more trustful. It might be edited with sixteen hundred that would totally demolish the original six.

An author is at liberty to give all his authorities in an introduction or an appendix. It is not skipping not to read *them*. If he and his authorities make two tales of it, that is for the critic to nose out—how else are they to live, poor things? It is hardly fair on them to snatch the bread out of their mouths as you go on. Besides, there is no law that compels the erudite author to tell *all* he knows in his footnotes. Sometimes, like the play Queen in Hamlet, they have the air of protesting too much. And sometimes they do not prove quite enough; such a king, says our historian, was a glutton: very well, it is a failing not confined to royal personages. It does not even, of itself, prove that he really was a king—he might have been an alderman. But in a note our historian brings chapter and verse.

Such a demagogue, we are told, was the mirror of courtesy. The proof lies far below in Note 31: at table the great man would say “Please” when he asked his neighbour to pass the salt.

Historians should skim us along without insisting on our seeing how thin their ice is.

## “THIS PUBLIC CONSCIENCE”

THE three words, as above, inverted commas and all, running across the whole front page of *Public Opinion*, gave, with certain following words, text for the leading article in that paper on February 9th, 1912. The following words were: “The Real English Conquest”—in the same huge type as the first three; and then, in a bold, black, but smaller type: “The State has largely taken the place of the Church as the organ of the collective conscience of the community.”

The inverted commas were to indicate quotation—quotation from Professor A. F. Pollard, Professor of English History in the University of London, “one,” says *Public Opinion*, “of the most brilliant of our historians.” Whether the big letters and black type were intended to delight the public, or to alarm it, or merely as a delicate tribute to Professor A. F. Pollard’s brilliance as a historian, we are left free to decide for ourselves.

It is not my ambition to controvert the judgment quoted, but merely to draw attention to it. In the first instance, the dictum is levelled at the Church of England; and perhaps the Church of England has already pleaded or denied the soft impeachment. That is not our business. But the dictum is not meant for the Church of England only. *Public Opinion* quotes as follows:—

*State replaces the Church*

“In a final chapter on English Democracy Professor Pollard, pointing out the growth in number of the departments of State, says that ‘they are merely machinery provided to give effect to public opinion, which determines the use to which it shall be put. But its very provision indicates that England expects the State to-day to do more and more extensive duty for the individual.’

“For one thing, the State has largely taken the place of the Church as the organ of the collective conscience of the community. It can hardly be said that the Anglican Church has an articulate conscience apart from questions of canon law and ecclesiastical property; and other Churches are, as bodies, no better provided with creeds of social morality.”

*The Eighth Commandment*

“The Eighth Commandment is never applied to such genteel delinquencies as making a false return of income, or defrauding a railway company or the Customs; but is reserved for the grosser offences which no member of the congregation is likely to have committed; and it is left to the State to provide by warning and penalty against neglect of one’s duty to one’s neighbour when one’s neighbour is not one individual but the sum of all.”

Professor A. F. Pollard, it is seen, does not mince matters with the Church of England. It can hardly be said, according to him, to have an articulate conscience “apart from questions of canon law and ecclesiastical property.” Canon law, we never knew before to be the strong point of the Established Religion. Ecclesiastical property is undoubtedly one of its solid assets.

But Professor A. F. Pollard has no prejudice; and he hastens to aver that other Churches are, as bodies, no better provided with creeds of social morality. Whether it is "as bodies" that some of them are provided with the Ten Commandments we are not told. Of one of the Ten Commandments he proceeds to speak in terms not altogether unflattering to the morality of people who still go to church. It appears that no member of the congregation is likely to have committed grosser offences against honesty than false returns of income, defrauding railway companies, or the Customs. We hope that it is so; if it be so, "members of the congregation" had better, it would seem, go on going to church, that they may still be restrained from open or secret stealing, helping themselves out of their masters' tills, falsifying accounts, floating bogus companies, and so following. A good many species of fraud exist; and it is comforting to learn that those who go to Church do not indulge in them. Rigidly honest to "one's individual neighbour," they may even come in time to apply the principles they have learned so well as "members of the congregation" in the case of "one's neighbour when one's neighbour is not one individual but the sum of all."

It appears certain from the newspapers that "grosser offences" than false returns of income, &c., *are* committed; if Professor A. F. Pollard is right in his suggestion that they are not committed by "members of the congregation," so much the better for the congregations. It might even seem plausible to suggest that some benefit to general morality might accrue if everybody went to church. Whether "other Churches," say our own, are "no better provided with creeds of

social morality" is a question the answer to which partly depends on terms, creeds, for instance. So far as I know, it is dogma which the Church formulates by means of creeds; her formulation of ethics summing itself up briefly in Commandments or Precepts, and expressed at length and large in her system of Moral Theology. That she has two separate systems of Moral Theology, one for Personal Morality, one for "Social Morality," I am not prepared to maintain. It would seem probable that she finds herself unable to make the distinction. For society has no existence except as consisting of individuals, and it is with each individual who will listen to her that she deals in reference to his duty towards God, towards his neighbour, and towards himself. In her mind, as I venture to read it, this is the only effectual method of perfecting society, by impelling towards perfection every human being. You may make a bucket of water wholesome for drinking, but only by the purification of every drop in it. There may be a true and wholesome Public Conscience, but not unless the men and women who make up the public have wholesome and true consciences. All conscience implies a recognition of obligation, and all obligation implies a sense of law; no sense of law can long survive belief in the existence of the law-giver; while it does survive such belief it is not true conscience, but a fortunate, though illogical, force of convention. The Church's business, therefore, is to preserve belief, in each member of society, of the existence of the law-giver—a Law-giver, competent and supreme, the force of Whose law will appear to every sort of man binding on himself, at cost of convenience, personal desire, or apparent profit. This is her Creed of Social Morality.



It may not appeal to Professor A. F. Pollard, or it may; we cannot tell. It may appear to have nothing to do with the State; it has everything to do with those of whom the State consists. If the State should insist on being herself the sole law-giver, then the State must rely on herself for the enforcement of her laws, and not complain of the Church if the human beings who compose the State evade inconvenient laws when they see their way to it. These human beings may be naughty children towards the Church, too, but their naughtiness towards the State must be brought home to them by such arguments as the State is mistress of. The State must not cry out: "Slap me these naughty children that don't belong to you." Slapping other people's children is indiscreet and interfering. It may cause the slapped to make faces at the slapper, but rarely generates obedient affection for the parent who requisitions the discipline. When the Church slaps her own naughty ones, the State is apt to call out: "Poor dears! What harshness! A scandalous old persecuting mother!"

After all this, let us say that there seems to be a good deal of force in Professor A. F. Pollard's announcement that "the State has largely taken the place of the Church as the organ of the collective conscience of the community."

"But men may construe things after their fashion."  
"We are in God's hands, brother."

And, remembering, we may say more of this.

## STATE AND CONSCIENCE

THE State, according to Professor A. F. Pollard, has largely taken the place of the Church as the organ of the collective conscience of the community. If this be so it is portentous enough: for the State's power is chiefly penal. She can make a law, and having made it, must punish those who break it; she cannot make them lovers of the law. Of course, she may profess her desire to educate the people up to admiration of her own particular laws, and even to love of law in general. But the manner in which modern states are apt to set about this effort is not likely to produce the only recognition of the real binding force of law that can stand against the strain of self-interest. It would be a pious work, but they are not prone to set piously about it. They talk at large about education; but their first principle in education is the elimination of God. In some countries the elimination is positive; and the non-existence of God is taught without disguise. In others, the elimination is negative; the subject must not be treated at all. The result in both cases is the same, whether it is intended to be the same or no. The origin, source, and sanction of all fundamental, eternal law is ruled out.

It may be the case that concurrently with such process another process is attempted—the inculcation of morality, and respect for the law, for their own sake. No such attempt is made in some instances. Where

it is made, it fails, and will fail more and more completely the further back the old teaching of God as the Lawgiver recedes into oblivion.

It is not asserted that all unbelievers are flagrantly immoral, any more than it can be asserted that all believers have always been faithful to the moral standard set them by belief in God. Some men are prone to a decorum that immorality must shock. But the majority of men will never be long held captive by anything so artificial as decorum; by the time they have ceased to care what they think of themselves, they cease to care what other people think of them—and there is nothing higher than self-respect, and the respect of Morality is a restraint: a restraint so contrary to self-will and self-indulgence that even the love and fear of God has not always been sufficient to enforce it throughout life on those who really have believed in God. Such a restraint will not long be suffered when no belief in God survives. Immorality of any sort can, to such as have no faith in God, only be proved to be obnoxious as injurious to self or to one's neighbour, and the selfish do not care about their neighbour, nor will they be forced to pursue their own best good at the cost of present loss in profit and pleasure; second-best good is often good enough for them.

Teach those who are learning that God is not, but that Morality must be, and they will ask themselves, Why? For a time they will protest in silence, or seem to acquiesce silently; lest perchance some finger of scorn may point their way; nevertheless, they bide their time, and presently they outgrow the pupil's dislike of scorn. Morality, they perceive, is merely a convention, or else a sacrifice of self to altruistic theories; and convention is not outraged by decorously

veiled offence ; whereas altruism, like reciprocity, they feel, should not be all on one side ; until everybody else sacrifices his own profit or pleasure to them, why must they be monopolists of self-sacrifice ? As for the pretty plea that in obedience to irksome ethical restraints they are securing their own superiority, they will mostly be content with something short of such invidious eminence ; why should they set themselves above their neighbours ? Of course the reasonably intelligent learner, taught to disbelieve in God, whether by positive statement that there is no such Being, or by the analogous process of total absence of any statement on the subject, may assimilate the teaching that the State herself is the guardian of morality. What then ? Why, the State's guardianship must be evaded when it leads to inconveniences as obvious as those that formerly followed on belief in the Existence of an Omniscient Law-giver, viz. the sacrifice of personal profit or pleasure. Fortunately, they remember, the State is not omniscient ; and therefore evasion is easier. Detection, no doubt, will lead to punishment ; but then, how much that is immoral the State makes no pretence of punishing, even when detection has supervened ?

As for rewards, in what State are they accorded to eminent morality ? Stupidity, if blatant enough, may earn its meed ; shallow, noisy parts are not likely to languish in the shade ; even real genius and capacity may extract a grudging recognition. But where is mere goodness—though it be but the goodness of stoic morality—rewarded by power and place ? Your pupil of unbelief knows better than that. The rigid equity without God that he has heard belauded, he gathers by observation, is only a handicap. Does his altruistic virtue help the successful agitator ? Not unless his

altruism takes the inverted form. "The less there is of mine, the more there is of yours," a formula applied not to what he has himself, but to what some third party may monstrously possess.

Are Ministers or party-leaders selected anywhere for their consistent practice of even such morality as we are told may exist when the existence of God has been disproved or forgotten? No Council-School teachers have the impudence to teach that, and, if they taught it, Council-School scholars would not swallow it, though hard and indigestible are the things they are made to swallow every day, till their intellectual stomachs are at breaking-point with flatulent crudities and obduracies.

Where the State has openly avowed itself director of the public conscience, and ousted, or tried to oust, the Church from her function of teacher and guardian of the consciences of men, the results have been precisely what might have been expected: morality and justice have not lingered long, but have followed religion into hiding or exile.

Believing, therefore, that religion and morality are inseparable, and that as a moral educator no State, complacently assuming the Church's office and function, has achieved or ever will achieve success, we cannot hear with equanimity the dictum that the State has largely taken the place of the Church as the organ of the collective conscience of the community. Whatever foundation of fact may lie under the statement is ground for serious apprehension and alert watchfulness.

## EMPIRE DAY

WHEN M. Comte invented the positivist religion he enriched it, not only with a Catechism but with a Calendar, celebrating on every day of the year the name of some great person or of some group of persons, who, in his opinion, had been of use to humanity. He also invented a set of sacraments—for instance, that of Retirement, to be administered, forcibly if necessary, on attaining the age of sixty.

When England made her official religion national, in place of remaining a part of the Church that is Catholic, she provided herself with a new Catechism, but abstained from the invention of a Calendar. In process of time, however, the shrunken remnant of the old one, prefixed to the Book of Common Prayer, was enriched by three special Commemorations—that of King Charles the Martyr on January 30, that of the Restoration of King Charles II on May 29 (which was also Royal Oak Day), and that of Gunpowder Plot on November 5. These three Commemorations, after long holding their place in the Calendar, were removed from it by Act of Parliament in 1859. But Comte was right in believing that people have a liking for days of Commemoration, and, when they cease to commemorate Saints, they commemorate something else. In Scotland, where they will have no Saints' Days, nor even feasts like Christmas, they celebrate New Year's Day with national ardour. In America there is the great feast

of the Declaration of Independence. Even official France celebrates July 14.

And now in England there is a new Feast: Empire Day.

I am a very loyal person, and I love my country. Her greatness I earnestly pray may be maintained; that her sons may grow up in unselfish love for her, and in unselfish patriotism, I pray also. That Empire Day and its celebrations may foster true patriotism we must all hope. There is no reason why they should not.

Nevertheless, there is something quaint about it all; something perhaps a little pathetic. St. George and Merry England was the old thing, but St. George is not greatly remembered now. Perhaps because he was a saint. "Saints," as a picture-dealer once assured me, "are at present down." Nor is England exactly merry. The loss of faith does not tend to cheerfulness in individuals, and never will tend that way in nations.

In schools, I understand, there is a flag-ceremony: how to call it I do not quite know. But it appears to be a sort of veneration of the Union Flag—a pretty ritual, and intended to promote the patriotic idea; not, perhaps, precisely the Imperial idea, or the symbol would be that of the Emperor, as it was in Imperial Rome. The veneration of the Imperial symbols in the Roman world was frankly pagan, and connected with the subsequent deification of the Emperors themselves; the tendency of modern Empires is not at all in the direction of any such deification. Nevertheless, there seems to be something semi-pagan in this cultus of a flag, especially when one notes that it is carried out in places where no higher cultus is encouraged.

I wonder if it strikes anyone what these children are venerating—the Cross of St. George and England,

St. Andrew's Cross of Scotland, St. Patrick's Cross of Ireland. Perhaps it is because the three together lose something of their likeness to the Cross that no one objects to the ritual. For three conjoined Crosses make rather a Star: the star of Great Britain's ascendancy, the star of the seas of which England is the mistress. But Catholics wot of another star of the seas, and to her also we may turn, that her ancient dowry be not forgotten, and that the merry day may come back when it shall be her dowry once again.

Empire Day suggests loyalty, not only to the Flag, but to the figure-head of the Ship of State: and that figure is the Sovereign's, by whom more than by anything else the whole great Empire is really bound together. For the plain truth is that the only point of absolute union in that vast Empire is the possession of a single Sovereign at its head. It is not true to say that there is the link of common speech, for English is not the language of scores of millions of our fellow-subjects, and it is the language of scores of millions who are not our fellow-subjects. Cabinets and Governments may be all-powerful where they hold their sway; but none of them hold sway throughout the Empire. The link which binds all Canada, all India, all the islands of the South and of the West, the Commonwealth of Australia and South Africa, to the British Empire is not the link of any law, nor that of common blood and common speech, but that of the possession of one Sovereign. *Vivat Rex.*

That God may save and strengthen him, guide and protect him, must be the prayer of Empire Day: that his subjects may be leal and loving, and those who act for him be wise and loyal.

To a Catholic there must seem something, as we

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have said, pathetic in any commemoration that reminds us how the old commemorations have faded out of national veneration, and old bonds of union have ceased to bind. For St. George's Merry England was part of Christendom, a province in the Church's fair realm, and now there is no Christendom, but only Europe. St. George's Merry England was united not only in one loyalty to one king, but in one faith, and one deference to the head of the faith.

How much is gone! How much is lost! That England and Ireland, Scotland and Wales may once again be one in faith and hope we are strongly reminded to pray by to-day's celebration: the crosses conjoined into a star our fellow-subjects are willing to venerate already as symbol of national unity. May a union more eternal yet bind us and them at last. May they give again the old allegiance to the cross for which Patrick lived, and George died, and on which Andrew learned the last chapter in the lesson of likeness to his master.

Meanwhile, let us cling fast to the link of union with our fellow-subjects that is left—loyal veneration for the august head of the Empire.

## DUTY AND DISCIPLINE

ONE of the obvious advantages of having your name in some directory is that it enables you the more readily to receive appeals for contribution to charities—and to hopes. It also leads to invitations to join in Movements.

The present writer quite recently received one to join the Duty and Discipline Movement. In the simplicity of his heart he had taken it for granted that in joining the Catholic Church he had already become a member of a rather widely-diffused organisation, one of whose objects is the inculcation of Duty and Discipline. And, even after reading the book of essays which accompanied the explanatory pamphlet on Duty and Discipline, he still suspects that the Catholic Church is the best organisation for that purpose.

The essays are by all sorts of people : some of whom are very distinguished, and all of whom are evidently agreed that there is a "lack of adequate moral training and discipline, the effects of which are apparent in these days amongst many British children, in rich as well as in poor homes, and which constitutes, in the opinion of many, a serious danger to society and to the permanent security of the Nation and of the Empire." In that opinion we entirely concur ; as we concur also in the belief that the organisers of the Duty and Discipline Movement do not imagine or exaggerate the evil of which they complain.

The promoters of the Movement decline, we are told, to recommend any special methods by which the objects they have at heart may be attained. The Movement deals with principles, not with methods; they consider that one of its aims is to discover the means by which juvenile indiscipline may most effectively be combated in the home and in the school, and that a right decision can only be arrived at by the united practical experience of a large number of men and women working earnestly and independently in their homes (and elsewhere) with this object in view. They feel that the decisions as regards the best methods of dealing with juvenile indiscipline must be left to the intelligences and consciences of individuals, or groups of individuals.

The establishment of Correspondence Circles is recommended, by which means it is hoped that valuable interchange of ideas, comparison of experiences, and observation of methods may help to achieve the above object.

The idea of these Circles is to enable young parents who desire, in the training of their children, to carry out practically the ideas advocated in the Essays on Duty and Discipline, to exchange their views and experiences quite frankly, by means of letters addressed to the Centre of the Circle, assured that their names and addresses, or those of the children discussed, can never be known to any but the Centre of their own Circle, who undertakes not to disclose to anyone the name and address of any member of the Circle. The members of a Circle never meet in Session.

Each person who undertakes to form a Circle invites a few friends, having practical experience in the

management and training of children, to write letters to him, or her, descriptive of the methods of training which they have found most useful and practical, or containing accounts of various phases, difficulties, or incidents in connection with the training and development of the children with whom they are concerned.

The originator, or Centre of the Circle thus formed, has these letters, or extracts therefrom, copied or typed, without any name or address appearing on them, and sends these copies to each member of his or her Circle.

Then follows a list of suggestions, as to the circulation of the essays among friends, societies, clubs, schools, libraries, &c.: as to public and drawing-room meetings, articles in magazines and reviews, and so on.

All this is very well. And we can hope that the Correspondence Circles, the Essays, the Public and Drawing-Room Meetings, &c., will have all the excellent results that the promoters of the Movement desire. We can only repeat that we heartily agree with them in deploring the evil they wish to combat, that we have recognised its existence for some time, and that we are as fully convinced as themselves that its continuance and growth must be a menace to Society, the Nation, and the Empire.

If English children, in rich as well as in poor homes, are increasingly lacking in duty and discipline, it is chiefly because their parents and elders are also increasingly lacking in the spirit of duty and discipline. And that is because, in rich as well as in poor homes, the source of discipline and duty is becoming more and more weakened and rare. In other and more direct words, because there is less and less religion.

We have not the slightest wish to speak disparagingly of excellent people who are trying to achieve an excellent object. But we cannot help saying that, in spite of their disclaimer, they do propose methods, and that those methods must largely fail because they are laid on an inadequate base.

It seems that they aim at producing their desired results by natural means, and only by supernatural means can they be attained. The effort to produce virtues by natural means can result mainly in producing only pagan virtues; and pagan virtues, even when produced, will never cure ills that, in fact, proceed from a growing paganism.

We believe that the lack of Duty and Discipline is due to the increasing paganism of English society—in poor as well as in rich homes.

Of course, it may be urged that, even in pre-Christian Paganism, there were pagan virtues; and that what some of the promoters of the Duty and Discipline Movement lament is that in England to-day even the pagan virtues are falling obsolete. But the Paganism of Greece and Rome *was* pre-Christian, and English society is not. A society which had never heard of Christianity had to defend itself by maxims of natural law and reason only; for without natural virtue it perceived that it must rot. But a world that has known Christianity, when it ceases to be Christian, will not readily submit to wear old shackles under new names, albeit the new names are but antique ones revived. And every virtue is a shackle to those who want to do what they like, no matter whether they be children or such as are of riper years.

When Christianity appeared it brought with it a law that was only partly new; but it propounded the law

with a new and a higher sanction. In some respects the new law was more stringent, even more austere than the old; for it demanded a perfection not previously dreamed of, and it aimed not merely at the regulation of outer conduct, but at the subjugation of the will. It did not content itself with the obedience of act, but claimed to rule the thoughts whence acts are born. But, though more stringent and austere in some respects than the old law, it was more sweet, because it gave a sweeter motive for obedience, and a more compelling. It gave, first, the presentment of Christ, and then asked those who had seen to love. Obedience was only the proof and test of love, as it was also the inevitable result of love: for love tends not merely to please the beloved, but to union with Him. It no longer called for virtues because they were useful to the State: but because they were the bond of likeness with the Lawgiver Himself and the bridge whereby fallen man might come near Him.

The world cannot quickly forget this. If any portion of it loses the old faith which taught thus, it is not ready to go on keeping the law whose old sanctions have been withdrawn. If it ceases to believe in the fair promises of Christ, because it has ceased to believe in Him, it will not submit to His law all the same. And a world which has once known Christianity is not like the world to which it was as yet unknown: it will persist in regarding virtue as part of the law of Christ—and it has rebelled against Christ. Nobody goes on obeying a monarch dethroned and exiled.

The distinction between Christian and Pagan virtues is too subtle for ordinary people, and all virtues are lumped together as part of the incubus of Christianity;

when Christianity is felt to be an incubus, those who so feel will no longer consent to bend their back to any part of the weight. For it is precisely to escape that weight that they have slipped the cords which have bound them to belief.

## ON DECADENCE

It would not seem, since Jerusalem stoned them, that the prophets were popular in their day ; and Jeremias was probably as little popular as any of them. He did not prophesy smooth things. Like the son of Jemla, he prophesied evil, and Achab hated Micheas.

But one needs not to be a prophet in order to read, in one's own fashion, such writing as may be seen upon the wall. If the reading be not flattering to the national *amour propre* of one's contemporaries, one must be content to be called a Jeremias, and to be unpopular in one's turn. England has a writing on her walls, on the walls which have been for centuries her national glory and her especial pride. They were wooden walls once ; hearts of oak were her ships, hearts of oak were her men ; they are of iron now. And upon them it is written that England can no longer afford to trust to them alone, under God, for the safety of her possessions in the Midland Sea. All the ships she can spare money for are wanted elsewhere ; for the defence of her Eastern highway, and of the fortresses that should guard it, she must trust to the uncovenanted benevolence of a friendly State, for with that State we have not even a treaty of alliance.

Long ago Spain was England's rival on the seas, and her foe there. The Dutch took their turn. Then came France, and the naval victories which set the seal of supremacy on British fleets were won over hers.



The old secular hatred and rivalry has died down, and they who love peace thank Heaven that it is so. But we are going far beyond friendship, and assuming the meek rôle of protégé. That should, at all events, mitigate our national vanity. Purse-proud England is to be no longer rich enough for a navy adequate to protect her sea-roads and gate-houses. Friendly France, oblivious of the past, must protect them for her.

This is not a political paper, and the present writer abhors politics. Those who live by them will have much to say on this matter, and much to make of it, if they can.

What we have to say has nothing at all to do with politics. We have nothing to say for or against those whose position in affairs enables them to make this plan. But we would like, all the same, to say something about the national spirit which causes them to feel strong enough to devise so original a method of national defence. In the last essay we alluded to a movement that calls itself the Duty and Discipline Movement; and we mentioned that they who receive its literature receive a collection of essays, on duty and discipline, written by certain distinguished people. Now, it seemed to us, in reading these essays, that what all these writers said, in most various ways, from most varied standpoints, amounted to this: a recognition of decadence.

That decadence they read in certain domestic symptoms, and we do not doubt the justness of their reading. The same decadence, as it seems to us, accounts for the apathy with which certain public questions are ignored. They are *too* public. They do not peremptorily appeal to those who are entirely preoccupied with private interests. Selfishness is a bad

soil in which to grow Patriotism: for selfishness is myopic, and can see no farther than to the end of its own personal profit, and no higher than to the top of its own greediness. It is odd to see what close neighbours extreme animosity and extreme indifference can be; but the spectacle does not amount to a phenomenon, for it requires no scientific explanation. The animosity is due to the same cause as the indifference—a parochial-minded selfishness. Those who have some private gain to achieve can be full of bitterness till they have got it, and they will be full, also, of indifference to any other matter that does not strike them as nearly touching their own pockets, or their own case.

If those who are charged with the public defence make a mistake in a grave instance, it must be a public misfortune; but it is a much greater misfortune if the public itself be indifferent and unmoved. Ministers of every shade of political colour have made mistakes; and it has been mostly they who have had, themselves, to pay for it. When they are suffered to proceed unchecked, then the nation pays; and what it loses, it has deserved to lose.

It is a human thing to fall into error, and not, of itself, a thing to scandalise us. I, for my part, am never scandalised, though they who rule my country for me (and some others) do many things that seem to me ill-calculated to serve her, or gain themselves credit. But healthy people are apt to discern really unhealthy symptoms in others, and it is not a sign of general sanity when a lunatic passes muster in general society as a sane man.

It seems to us that the party opposed to those at present in power will make great capital out of the Ministerial decision to confide the defence of the

Mediterranean another navy than our own. But it also seems to us that this was foreseen, and discounted ; because it was foreseen that there would be an indifferent majority.

Of the political sentiments of any majority we have nothing to say ; it is a political affair, and none of ours. Of national indifferentism we may speak, for it has nothing to do with politics, and concerns national character. To say the same thing over and over again is, no doubt, tedious ; but the thing may be true and vital for all that. We attribute the indifference to certain great questions of national import, which we cannot help believing to exist, to the thing called Decadence ; and that Decadence we believe to be rooted in a swift-growing cancer of selfishness ; and the cause of that selfishness we can explain by the growth of disbelief in God. And how is a nation to believe in God which, as a nation, is not taught to believe in Him ?

## MESSRS. HOOLIGAN AND TURVEYDROP

AMONG the lost arts may be counted that professed by the late Mr. Turveydrop, if it be not a contradiction in terms so to speak of an immortal personage. Of course we allude to Mr. Turveydrop senior; young Mr. Turveydrop's art of dancing is not by any means lost, though it seems to have lost its way. The elder Mr. Turveydrop modelled himself on the Prince Regent, and professed Deportment.

It is not likely that anyone now admires the First Gentleman in Europe; if he really were the first, we could but hope he would be the last also. Nor is the Act of Deportment as practised by Mr. Turveydrop to be regretted. It was false and insincere: more vulgar than any roughness. But that was specially the fault of the copyist, and of his choice of a model. Vain and vulgar, silly and selfish, old Turveydrop would have been insufferable no matter what he adopted as his stock-in-trade. As it was his whole stock-in-trade was Deportment, and on it he lived, idle and intolerable. But Deportment was not invented by him, nor even by George IV. And it survived both of them. It began before George III went mad, and it lived on, in boarding-schools and middling society, till quite late in the reign of his granddaughter. It is as dead as Queen Anne now.

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Becky Sharp knew how to jeer at it: but funny as her scorn of Miss Pinkerton was, it was only scorn, bitter and savage, and does not make her undoubted genius more admirable. Miss Pinkerton was, like Mr. Turveydrop, an old hypocrite, though of a different pattern: with her, Deportment was also a stock-in-trade; she sold it, as she sold the dates in English history, to the young ladies at her Academy on Chiswick Mall. And to her, and her sort, it did not occur that it stood for something better.

To her and Mr. Turveydrop alike, it was merely part of the art of polite seeming. And, because she and he had thousands of fellow-artists, the idea of Deportment became identified with the general scheme of humbug and pretence, against which a revolution began some years ago. Revolutions are much less afraid of destroying what is good or harmless than of not destroying what they perceive, half-perceive, or imagine, to be bad and noxious.

But all along there had been a practice of Deportment that was not at all like that of Mr. Turveydrop and the elder Miss Pinkerton. The lady, at all events, was shrewd enough to be aware that there was a sort of demeanour that was apt to distinguish people of high station, birth, and breeding. It seemed a part of them. She was not herself highly born, nor highly bred, nor was her station lofty; many of her young ladies were in the same predicament: the only thing she could perceive to do was to ignore those little facts, and behave herself, and teach her pupils to behave, as though the facts were different. And facts hate to be ignored: they always revenge themselves. So that all the Pinkerton School of Deportment had the same unlucky quality of sham, pretence, and unreality. That

was what doomed it. I am not in Nature's confidence, and I take it entirely on trust that she abhors a vacuum: if she does, it is because a vacuum has nothing in it. She can't bear things with nothing in them. That is why the Pinkerton Department perished; it had nothing in it. Where it lived on, it had most reality: it expressed something that was there: something perhaps not of the first importance, but something not altogether unimportant, an idea that social intercourse was not exactly the jostling of a crowd, where elbowing, or shouldering, one's way was the only mode of progression.

By the less strong it was used as a weapon of defence, by the less weak it was admitted as a concession to natural defencelessness. When Department received its Death Warrant, good manners were not mentioned in the indictment: but in Revolutions it is customary to execute on a large scale. Much that was true was chargeable against Department, and, though good manners were innocent, it was easier to kill both together—since they were a kind of step-sisters.

In Revolutions it is criminal to have even cousins who are suspect. That was why so many thousands of harmless and good creatures were massacred in France when Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality took each her sword in hand for the purification of society. The poor things had done nothing against Freedom, Brotherhood, or that equalness of everybody to everybody else which Nature herself has made so obvious, but they might have kinsfolk who might have liked to: so their heads had to fall too.

And, though good manners do not consist in Department, there may be a family likeness. The best sort of Department was an expression of good manners, and

the worst sort of good manners are not much more than decent Deportment. So, in our revolution against humbug, pretence, and unreality we decided to let good manners perish as well as her *passée* step-sister.

Certainly bad manners are real enough: there is no nonsense about them, and no one mistakes them for anything but what they are. They do not pretend respect for anything, except, perhaps, money, and that is no pretence: the rudest cringe and grovel to it. They have no idea of seeming interested, or even patient, when they are bored; they make no show of deferring to anything that cannot insist on their deference. They intend to do what they like, and it does not matter in the least what anyone else may like or dislike. They are not afraid of being vulgar, they are only afraid of not getting precisely what they want at once. They are not distinctive of any social class: in the lowest they are expressed in one way, in the highest in another, but the same thing is expressed in both—selfishness that is naked, and not at all ashamed.

The middle classes are now what they never were before, by far the best mannered: but that will only last till the middle classes have discovered that it is “smart” to be ill-bred. Men are not much worse-mannered than women, though the expression is different: the ill-mannered modern woman, who chances to fall in with a man better-mannered than herself, simply takes advantage of it, and gives nothing in return. So that he is tempted, unless he be very good, to suspect that he has made a fool’s bargain, everything for nothing.

Really good manners are a delicate bloom on the ripest fruit of Christianity: a last refinement of the civilisation Christianity brought into the world. That is why they are grown old-fashioned.

## TWO PESSIMISMS

THERE was once a promising little friendship on paper—an epistolary friendship, as the elder Miss Jenkyns and Dr. Johnson would have called it—nipped in the bud owing to the alleged pessimism of one party to it. He was the less well known of two authors, and the better known gave over complimenting him on his books, and gave over writing him charming letters, because he was not in love with the present age—this so-called twentieth century, as the curate witheringly described it.

Of a century not quite in its teens it is rash to say much; not every *enfant terrible* is disagreeable when grown up. But I cannot perceive that it is a sacred duty to admire the present moment. Swift loathed his own species, and men are to be excused for not loving him; to dislike the age in which you live is not inhuman, though it is probably impolitic, and unlikely to help you in being of service to it. Whether it be also silly must depend on the reasonableness or unreasonableness of your grounds of dislike. If the qualities you imagine yourself to perceive in another person, or group of persons, are unattractive, you are held excused from being attracted; no one is angry because you cannot admire selfishness, bumptiousness, rudeness, hooligan manners, profanity, shallow conceit, irreverence, and what-not. And, if one who lives in a certain period, thinks it marked by bad and ominous



characteristics, it is hardly fair to abuse him for liking it less than some other age, distinguished, as he thinks, by finer traits. Of course, his judgment may be at fault in both instances; the age that is deceased, and has left only its memoirs and its miniature behind, may be flattered in both; the miniature may display only the upper portions of the figure, the lower limbs were perhaps unsightly or deformed; and the memoirs may observe a wise economy of detail. The qualities supposed to exist in the living people may mean less than is imagined. The rudeness you deprecate may be wit whose point you merely failed to see: your fancied hooligan may be a light-hearted creature who only cracks your head open out of high spirits, and so on.

All this we must admit; but, all the same, I cannot see that it is criminal to be a *laudator temporis acti*. 'Tis an ancient calling, and was freely exercised so long ago that our name for it belongs to a language dead for centuries. It is not conceited, for he who thus praises the past does not flatter what is his own. Nor is it servile, or time-serving, for the past is not suborned, nor tickled, nor grateful; he who praises it can get nothing out of it for his pains, not even a smile or a caress. The past is a dead king who makes no peers, and rewards his living courtiers with no ribbons or stars; he has not a penny in his pocket. He will not flatter back; in his silent mouth are no puffs, no advertisements; he can bestow no vogue, nor fashion, nor popularity. The praise of him may be half blind, but it is not mean, nor cringing, nor self-seeking. It cannot be corrupt, nor venal, even though it were affected and but half sincere. The excessive *laudator temporis acti* may be a little morbid; there is apt to be something half pathetic, half wistful, about him;

we may doubt if his backward glances of admiration will ever make the present more admirable; but his weakness is not ignoble. He is a sort of martyr, though not the best sort. Every Christian makes daily sacrifice of something pleasant; that is a better sacrifice, for it is to make the future better: but the *laudator temporis acti* makes his sacrifice, too, not on the altar of faith, but on that of his ideals; for the present has more to give him, and he lets it all go because he will not grow rich by time-serving.

The successful author of whom, higher up, mention was made, was scandalised by what seemed to him the pessimism of his younger literary brother, in that the latter said hard things of the present age by reason of its unbelief and religious indifference or shallowness. This, he urged, was really wicked, as contravening the onward procession of time towards perfect good. To him such gloomy estimate of the world's actual condition, in this its latest moment, appeared profane.

The onward procession of time towards perfect good is not merely a phrase, but one that involves a metaphor. Does every long procession, then, move continuously upward, and always straight forward? Is its course really up an inclined plane that has no dips and no turnings? If not, the procession must go downhill at times, and at times proceed in directions not directly pointing to its goal.

If faith in Divine Goodness and Divine Providence really insists on our belief that this present age is better than all its predecessors, then each of them must have been better than any that came before it. So that primitive Christianity, of which we hear so much, must be a complete delusion, and the tenth century stand ten pegs higher on the ladder of perfection than

the first. The Dark Ages must, of course, have been incomparably lighter than the Augustan, or any earlier age; all the dismal groans of historians about the tenth and eleventh centuries must be sheer affectation, for they *must* have marked a huge advance and improvement on the eighth and ninth, and still more on the second, third, or fourth. If it be a covert profanity to hint that the present age is marked by a wider spread of unbelief, then it must be openly profane to assert that the eighteenth century was less believing than the sixteenth or the fifteenth,

That there will be an ultimate goal of perfect good, we must indeed believe, and do. But is it promised that all shall reach it? Shall there be no defections on the way, no stragglers, and no deserters?

Are there not two sorts of pessimism; one that may be nervously inclined to call all the darker colours black, and one that perversely calls black white? To my thinking he was a pessimist who thought the reign of the Goddess of Reason an advance in human progression on the ancient Reign of Faith in Catholic Christendom. Yet the latter came first, and the Goddess of Reason only set her uncouth throne on altars that had stood for over a thousand years, in a land that had called herself Eldest Daughter of the Church.

The most fatal of all pessimisms is that which calls Evil, Good, and sees no menace in evil growing, but sits smiling on it, and declaring that it is all healthy progress and upward, onward movement.

## PEACE AND PEOPLES

PROFESSOR Wilhelm Forster, the well-known astronomer and worker in the peace movement, has issued and circulated a complete and verbal translation of Mr. Churchill's speech on the Navy Estimates in order to correct wrong impressions caused by erroneous translations and summaries.

So we read in the *Times* newspaper, and the reading reminds us of the existence of a certain society to which, some while ago, we ourselves were invited to belong. It is called the British Council of the Associated Councils of Churches in the British and German Empires for fostering friendly relations between the two Peoples, but we quote from memory and the title is rather long; perhaps we have not got it quite right. At first we seemed to savour something odd as well as long-winded in this society's name, and hardly expected, on turning to the long list of Vice-Presidents, to find among them the names of Catholics. In some cases it was not easy to guess whether the distinguished personages mentioned were Catholic or no: thus between the names of the Right Rev. Lord Bishop of Bangor and Right Rev. Lord Bishop of Gloucester, came those of the Right Rev. Lord Bishop of Liverpool, and Right Rev. Lord Bishop of Birmingham. Were the present Archbishops of Liverpool and Birmingham intended? Lower down the list another Right. Rev. Lord Bishop of Birmingham supervened,

though no second Bishop of Liverpool. Clearly *one* of the Right Rev. Lord Bishops of Birmingham must mean the Catholic prelate, and it did not matter which. But the question as to whether or no Catholics could belong to this society was set at rest by the appearance of his Eminence Cardinal Bourne's name upon the list; and we joined the society accordingly. With the object of such a society every one should feel deep and earnest sympathy. That every one does *not* is evidenced by the need for the society's existence. Of the methods pursued by it we have nothing to say in criticism; but we would like to say something in the way of advice. And that advice is very simple, and even more brief than the society's own name. Let it direct its influences on the right people. Deputations from it have waited, we believe, on august personages, and have been received with courtesy and respectful attention. So far, so good; and let us hope the benevolent reception of such emissaries in such quarters may produce all the permanent effect desired.

But our own belief is that much more practical results would be produced if the society could bring any real influence to bear upon the public press in Germany and in England. For it is also our belief that if peace should be broken between the two Empires it will not be through the action of the Sovereign of either country, but by means of the irritant forces of a section of the press in both countries. What Sovereigns really think or wish can only be conjectured by their *own* people in each case, and very incorrectly estimated by the people under the allegiance of the other monarch. What newspapers are trying to effect can be felt by even the stupidest reader in England and in Germany, and that which

many of them are willing to bring about is clearly a state of morbid irritation, suspicion, and passion that could only lead to war in the long run. A habit has grown up, even among responsible speakers here, of alluding to England as a Democracy which is hardly polite to the head of what is still an unconstitutional Monarchy. Nor is the term very descriptive, for, if anything, our condition is rather that of a temporary oligarchy, which reminds us of Venice erected on piles rooted in the mud. But, though England be not precisely a Democracy, and Germany is an absolute Monarchy with a Parliament, we must repeat that it is not by addresses or deputations to the British or the German Sovereigns that the society with the long name can hope to produce its desired effect, but by bringing, if it can, persuasion to bear on the militant press of the two countries; for the whole ignorance of modern peoples lies in the power of the press. By it the passions of the peoples can be, and often are, inflamed; vulgar jealousies can be aroused, fostered, and made noisy; national prejudices and suspicions hatched into bitter hatred; and every sincere effort at mutual understanding made by official diplomacy brought to nought.

In this line of business nothing is more lamentable than the indulgence in personalities and insults which a certain section of the press, both here and in Germany, allows itself. Anything likely to insult or annoy the German Emperor, his heir, or his family is seized upon and given prominence by such English papers as we have in mind; and they are not a bit worse than similar papers in Germany, wherein much has appeared insulting to our present Sovereign and his two immediate predecessors. And, though august person-

ages naturally afford the most obvious target for this sort of pitiful attack, it is not by assaults on them alone that it can keep itself supplied with offensive matter. Everything German is liable to such vilification here, everything English held up to scorn or derision there.

If the Associated Council of Churches, &c., has any real power—which we hope it may have—it would do far more good by urging, with all its force and the whole strength of its organisation, a more gentlemanly tone, a more amiable spirit, upon the peccant press, than by any number of Imperial or Royal receptions.

The society has its organ, a very readable monthly report, called the *Peacemaker*; but granting that every member of the Association reads it—which is granting a good deal—it can only convert the converted. Its funds and its energies would be better spent in the effort to bring to a better mind those who are not yet on the side of peace. The *Peacemaker* is something in the position of a preacher who harangues the congregation he has on the iniquity of those that have not come to church. If the preacher could, he would fill his benches better by enlisting on his side the proprietors of places of rival attraction; for the absentees would hear them, and do not hear him.

In this matter much would be done, if it could be done, by carrying the peaceful war into the camps of those capitalists in whose hands the newspapers really are. They also may have consciences, and it would be worth while to carry on extensive excavation works in search of them. They need not, either, be impervious to the argument that colossal wars are hardly favourable to commerce, and that commerce and capital are apt to suffer simultaneously. The present writer is

unable to resist the conviction that, if wars should ever cease from a world constituted as ours now is, it will be, humanly speaking (which means, apart from miracles of Divine grace), by the understanding of Governments and of those that make them that war is too destructive of commerce for the patience of an age that cares for nothing else.



## DRESS AND CLOTHING

CLOTHING was one of the immediate results of original sin, but dress was a later and slower development.

Nevertheless, one may be reminded even now of the primary connection between clothes and original sin. It was not, indeed, vanity, but shame that led our first parents to cover themselves: but it was vanity that brought them to their fall—they wanted to be as gods and know all things. And as time went on vanity refused to content herself with coverings that merely answered the purposes of modesty, and of protection from cold and heat.

Vanity, having made herself thoroughly at home, sought a mate and found one in the irritable spirit of Novelty: their union produced Fashion, now very old, but condemned to a chronic second-childhood. Her dictates are often silly and apish, sometimes mischievous, and her obedient votaries are apt to make us remember the original connection between dress and original sin. For vanity leads some to head the procession, and shame crowds others into the pitiful tail of it. It certainly is not the frank love of beauty that makes the most eager followers of fashion; for fashions are very often ugly. But every new fashion is novel for a time, and in novelty the easiest satisfaction of vanity is to be attained. It calls for no gifts of mind or person, neither cleverness or loveliness is required: an empty head can display the most out-

rageously new sort of hat quite as conspicuously as one filled with all the wisdom of Solomon: and the hardest-featured and most ungainly creature will look no uglier or more ridiculous in a hobble skirt than Helen of Troy would—or Mary Stuart.

In this way fashion is a leveller: for it destroys the superiority of natural gifts. The foolish and the un-beautiful are aware of it, and hide their deficiencies, in the world's masquerade, under the cheap domino of fashion. Not, of course, that this goddess is an inexpensive one to worship, but many silly and ugly people have plenty of money, and many others behave as though they had.

The alliance between vanity and shame is of so long standing that they appear to be almost naturally related. And there is a sort of shame that is merely a sort of vanity: such is the shame of not being in the fashion.

If vanity could ever be of any use at all you might expect it to be so in hindering people not ill-looking from making themselves appear so by dressing monstrously. But it does not seem to serve them much.

Thousands of women whom Jane Austen would describe as "well enough," have, within the last year or two, made themselves monstrous by meek and servile adoption of fashions that no beauty could carry off. And this shame of not being fashionable has blinded thousands more to a shame they ought to have felt; for the dress in which it has led them to display themselves to the public has been not only ugly, and "unbecoming" in the new sense, but unbecoming in the original sense of that innocently debased word, that is to say, indecorous and indelicate.

It is odd to see ladies who would not read a "sugges-

tive" novel, parade themselves in costumes that are simply not modest, with no better excuse than that such dress is the fashion, which means that it was recently novel.

And they must be well aware that their example will be followed, and, as such examples always are, in descending, exaggerated.

For fashion is not one of the monopolies of the upper classes, as in meeker ages they were called, or of the leisured classes, as they are called in an age which is never witty except by accident.

Once every class had its own sort of dress, and all of them were dressed more picturesquely. Now all are dressed alike, that is to say, one class serves to another as a mirror in which it could see, very soon if it chose, how silly and how unsightly its fashions are, since they become vulgar when they are become common, and intolerable when they have grown cheap.

And fashion changes so rapidly that no cheapness of material in the copy can prevent its being expensive. The living wage has to take count of this: for husbands have wives and even daughters, and daughters and wives alike must be fashionable. The dresses of last year would be impossible this.

Any decent person must wish to see poorer people well-dressed; but it is not pleasant to see poor children wanting warm clothes in winter, half-shod, and wet through, for lack of reasonable wrappings against the weather, but clad in tawdry finery, thin, dragged and often dirty, with necklaces and bangles, and half the useless etceteras of costume, and scarcely any of its essentials.

In a hot summer one may just as often see such children, who would be more comfortable and more

clean in a washing frock, sweltering in the fusty velveteen of last winter, with ponderous velveteen hat to match, and smothered in a fur or feather boa by way of cape.

In this matter "the poor" are not much sillier than many in the classes ranging up above them. If council-school children must have glass pendants, subalterns' wives must have diamond tiaras—convertible into necklets. And middle-class folk take it for granted that they must dress like peeresses; where were Democracy else?

It is not comfort they seek. Comfort, the late Laureate assured us, is scorned of devils; and, if that be so, they have a devilish scorn of it. Silly creatures who will not be content even to look nice, who prefer to look nasty so they look fashionable, will not be content to be comfortable.

If Mr. Lloyd George could enrich us with an Act to insure the life of any one fashion for twenty years, even the people with fixed incomes would be better off. But who on earth can say where Mr. Lloyd George, or any of us, will be in twenty years' time?

## OF CATHEDRALS

A CATHEDRAL is the basilica, church, or chapel in which a bishop's chair is. We know that, and so we know that there need, essentially, be nothing grandiose about the building, and that, in the beginnings of churches, there could hardly have been anything grandiose in the places where bishops had their seat. The room, in the house of Pudens, where the first chair of Peter was, was the forerunner of the Lateran, and *Omnium Ecclesiarum Urbis et Orbis Mater et Caput*, the Cathedral of the World.

But, since, nearly two thousand years have passed of Time's procession towards Eternity, and twenty centuries of experience have taught the people to associate with the word cathedral ideas of beauty and dignity; so that, on the one hand, even ecclesiastical authorities are wont to recognise this, by giving to a church in which a bishop's throne is set, but which is felt to be inadequate to the name of cathedral as lacking the fitting dignity or importance, some name, as Pro-Cathedral, implying a promise of something better to come; and, on the other hand, simple folk, who are not ecclesiastically learned, are apt, whenever they see a church of distinguished beauty or size, to call it a cathedral. We Catholics have no bishop at Norwich, or at Arundel, but the visitor to either town will have had his attention complacently drawn by some inhabitant to the Catholic Cathedral.

It is a mistake of fact, but not a bad sort of mistake, for it is an unconscious witness to long and true experience. Men expect something of a cathedral, because for many centuries the word has signified something lovely, noble, and above common.

The Catholic Church, when the Arts ceased to be false goddesses, adopted them as her children, and took them into her service. The service of literature has always been acknowledged, for it is a direct form of speech, and so a quite obvious means of instruction. The service of painting is so like it that it also has been acknowledged commonly and freely; for pictures are books, not only for the lettered, but for those who cannot read. And music, even without words, has a voice so clear that it may speak of God to the blind, who can see neither letters nor pictures. But the service of architecture to religion is not so explicitly recognised, though it has almost from the beginning of the Church been admitted implicitly by its use.

The method of service is not so obvious as that of spoken or written language, or that of pictorial art, or even that of song and musical sound. No dogma is set forth, plainly and without allegory, by architecture, as dogmas can be set forth in literature and in painting. It, however, is also among the prophets, and there is only gracelessness in measuring and comparing the service of the prophets; it is like plaguing one lost in admiration of the Matterhorn by reminding him that Mont Blanc is higher,

Perhaps the teaching of noble architecture belongs rather to the sphere of moral than of dogmatic theology; it influences faith by ethic, and binds the soul to faith by cleansing it. And if a cathedral

cannot formulate Catholic doctrine, neither will it lend itself to teach any other. For over three centuries and a half the pulpits of all the old Catholic cathedrals in England have been listening to an alien teaching, but the cathedrals have never turned Protestant. They express what they were built to express, and ignore the Reformation. Their air is as bland as ever, as devout; they make no descent from their serene aloofness into the lists of controversy; but their aloofness is as strong a protest as though it were not silent. No Reformer in England or elsewhere has ever converted them: the ancient cathedrals may be freeholds of new religious corporations, but the mark of ownership has never obliterated the birth-mark of origin and purpose. Perhaps that is why they have borne, and bear now, so little share in the actual contemporary life of "reformation countries." I suppose many a Catholic has dropped in at one or other of them, in England, and, as it chanced, heard some portion of a service, heard lovely boy-voices singing the old king's immortal songs, and watched the yellow evening light fall on the great, empty, pathetic spaces, tipping with gold, perhaps, the niddle-nodding autumnal bonnets of the literal two or three gathered together for worship. Whatever else may have struck him, one thought could not fail: that it all had nothing on earth to do with the people. England was outside. Here, within, was an archaism: an attempt to pretend that something gone was present. Out in the street, beyond the green close, was the life, the interest, the *business* of the people; inside, nothing but a monument and a decorum.

High overhead, as the little, withered, meek, unquestioning congregation creeps home to cosiness and

tea, old bells, baptized centuries ago with Mary's name, or Peter's, proclaim their patience.

He Al-so Serves  
Who on-ly Stands  
And Waits.

So they stand, the old Catholic cathedrals, and wait, in patience, faith, and hope.

There is no such a thing as Protestant Church architecture. There is post-Reformation architecture for theatres, skating rinks, railway stations, and municipal baths. And the post-Reformers are welcome to it. But if Protestants who rejoice in bishops, as pew-openers enjoy poor health, are for building a cathedral, they try to build a Catholic one. The architect goes a-gleaning, and scrapes together bits from Salisbury, bits from Chartres, bits from Cologne, an arch from Amiens, a nave from Notre Dame, a lady-chapel (for the Ladies chapel, cosier for morning prayers), and so on. The new stones are all dug from the old quarries. The more like a real cathedral the thing looks, the more it will resemble what it is not—an old Catholic building meant for the old Catholic Mass.

Cathedrals are for bishops, and some Protestant branches of the Reformation-tree kept bishops on their bough, partly by accident, partly for the look of the thing. But a new non-Catholic cathedral can never be induced to express the new non-Catholic idea. It refuses to look like a cathedral at all, or insists on expressing the old, disallowed idea, of a place for a Catholic bishop to pontificate in.

Other Reformation religions declined to be bothered with bishops. They saw no sense in scotching the queen-bee and hiving common bees with the queenly

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title. They want no cathedrals: they require preaching-halls, and they build them, something like dull theatres, but more recently with a half-hearted affectation of ecclesiasticism. Money is seldom lacking, and money is deemed capable of purchasing taste, but it cannot buy conviction; and a Gothic meeting-house is one of the most unconvinced-looking things I know. "Which shall I be?" it seems to ask of itself, and (aside) of the public, "A chapel or a church? If a chapel, why these mediæval airs? Where was I in the Middle Ages? If a church, what is going on in my inside?"

One may even see, nowadays, meeting-houses with crosses on them, venerated as religiously as the cross on a hot-cross bun.

## OF STONE SERMONS AND WHITE ELEPHANTS

WE read of an American lady to whom an enthusiastic fellow-tourist appealed, to know if the Venus de Medici did not overpower her.

"I guess," she declared, "none of those stone women ever sat on *me*."

Cathedrals do not sit on us; their influence is potent without being oppressive. No influence, however strong, affects all alike, and there may be some who are not sensible of the appeal of these stone sermons. They are right not to pretend to feel it; all attempt to affect a taste we have not leads to false taste, and affected feeling is worse than affected taste. The wonderful loveliness of Nature is quite invisible to some people, and they are no more to blame than if they were colour-blind. So, too, with really great Music; it is quite meaningless to certain hearers, and the lack of a sense is not a fault in them, but only an unfortunate deprivation. Yet it is equally true that there are others to whom a forest-glade or a symphony are more than sermons; they seem to serve them as a sort of sacramentals. No one is to affect such a quality; but, to those who have it, it is as real as another's capacity for getting all that there is in them from the sermons preached in church; and we are not to undervalue it, or laugh it off.

So of stone sermons—cathedrals, and all that in this place we mean to signify by cathedrals, such as an abbey, or a cloister, a noble church, or even the ruin of one: for the ruin of a beautiful building has often a deeper loveliness than the building ever had when it stood intact, the pathos of its ruined state having no taint of degradation: it is only the ruin of a man that is ghastly and horrible.

By stone sermons, then, we do not mean stony sermons in pulpits, but the preaching of a certain sort of noble buildings, as of cathedrals.

In England, owing to their alienation in actual use by the dismal Reformation, they have a special effect of pathos, as of beauty widowed, suffering in a patient, immortal hope. They carry, too, a message of indomitable fidelity. But England is not all Christendom, and there are cathedrals, elsewhere, that still serve their original, dedicated purpose. In any country they preach, and of themselves, apart from effects produced within them, as by great ceremonial, the actual presentments of sacred things by image or picture, holy music, and the like. The sort of influence whereof we speak is independent of those things, and can work in us without them, though the complete effect intended is made up of the combination of building, sacred function, devout representations, and the rest, all together: for the sense of sacredness in any place must be deepened by the presence of all these things; as, for instance, by the knowledge we may have that some great relic is preserved there, or That Which is greater than any relic is adored there. These things, however, are themselves objects of worship or of veneration, and this is true of the building itself only by association. The actual stones of which it is made might have

lain unhewn in their quarry, or served some meaner purpose: they are holy only by dedication, use, and benediction. Yet the building, now it is made what it is, preaches of itself, and goes on preaching even when, as in the old English cathedrals, those other things are no longer present. In Gothic church-architecture almost every detail is given some definite mystical significance, though, perhaps, this minute intention has been read into it by the zeal and piety of commentators rather than been originally present to the mind of the architect. Anyway it is lawful and profitable to find any possible good meaning in what only means what is good. Nevertheless, the influence of this building does not depend upon such readings, for few comparatively are aware of them, and the influence is felt by many. This is, roughly, paralleled by the spiritual effect of some holy and ancient book, which the merely devout reader experiences, though he may be without familiarity with the critical, and beautiful, expositions of this or that passage or phrase. The first, most simple, and most important, impression produced, for instance, is that of reverence, and such reverence is excited very little by any expert admiration of detail. Condescendence upon detail, indeed, many find rather a distraction than a help: as a reverent worshipper of the Blessed Sacrament would be teased by officious explanations from the sacristan of the meaning involved in the jewelled designs of the tabernacle.

Such persons, potently affected by the force and message of a great cathedral, are not helped by instruction as to detail of significance. Expert appreciation is too scientific for emotion, and the emotion of reverence is too spiritual to be aided by admiration of completeness or ingenuity.

It is hard to believe in any true emotion not being on the side of the angels: and reverence is the last emotion fallen angels would suggest. The reverence effected, in those who are capable of it, by a great or lovely cathedral is so intimately connected with worship, that worship has almost a twin-birth with it. And this is no "light thing or slight." For genuine worship is rarer in us than we like to recognise or admit. Worship implies faith, and cannot exist without it, for it must have an object higher than ourselves; but our faith is sometimes lethargic, chilly, and habitual, rather than actual and vital, and what awakens it, warms it, and brings it to that life and movement that act necessitates, cannot be of trivial use or import.

The building of great cathedrals was not, when they were built, the mere provision of a need; it was an Act of Faith, and an Act of Worship: to such active faith and worship they move us still, even though, as in England, the faith they were built to illustrate, and the worship they were meant to serve, has been outlawed from them. In our own day we have seen the building of our great cathedral at Westminster. Our friends the Weaker Brethren might have objected, some, we may be pretty sure, did object, that it was not a necessity: by which they meant that the Catholic population of that part of London did not demand or justify so huge a fane, and that Catholics in other parts of London had their own churches, or had them not. The *bête noire*, if such a bull may serve our turn, of Weaker Brethren is the White Elephant. A Catholic cathedral at Westminster, they would urge, was a White Elephant. What it really was requires no metaphor to express it—an Act of Faith noble enough to link modern Catholic England with the ages in

which faith was not pushed aside as an anachronism : an Act of Worship that proclaims to a selfishly utilitarian world that, in the Catholic idea, man's gifts to God are not to be measured by the inch-rule of man's conscious needs for himself. We are not to say to God : " All I have is Thine, and this mean sum I will invest in Thee, because thus I see my way to getting back for myself a higher rate of interest than by spending it elsewhere."

## AN ADMIRATION NOTE

GREAT cathedrals, we say, inspire in the first place reverence, a religious reverence indissoluble from worship, and not to be confounded with the different veneration aroused by the sense of their immemorial age. And such reverence is a stimulus of faith, which it awakes, so that out of the dormant habit an act is produced.

But a word may be said of the other veneration to which we have just alluded.

In the case of our alienated English cathedrals, as also in that of the still Catholic cathedrals and abbeys of the Continent, we are moved to this sense of veneration by the impression of their historic age. We may be unlettered in history, but the effect does not at all depend upon expert historical knowledge. The archæologist may, indeed, be able to read by a mere glance at the form of an arch or the style of a pillar the precise period to which this or that part of the buildings belongs. He finds a great and legitimate pleasure in this. But the sense of which we speak is much more than a pleasure: and to those who are not archæologists the age of the great and sacred fane appeals quite as strongly, without any effort of theirs to decide or surmise as to precise date. It is not a mere consciousness of interest they are aware of, but an emotion that they feel. And this emotion is also

spiritual and refining, that is, purifying. All spiritual emotion is purifying, because it is essentially opposed to the appetite of mean and sordid things. This veneration, aroused in us by ancient cathedrals and the like, enters our soul by more than one avenue. First by the historical sense, even though we be not ourselves accomplished historians: few lads are, and yet a lad is often specially susceptible of this emotion. It is enough that we should perceive the gracious and venerable antiquity of the place, for the perception connects us with a chain whereby we find ourselves linked back personally with a history which we can only surmise, or may know but in part, and remember in part: we are, perhaps, more affected by the whole from our very ignorance of parts. What we know is not, maybe, much; yet it is enough. We know that the place is very old; that it has seen the rise and fall of dynasties, and outlived the growth and decay of governments: that it antedates the changes whereby the new Europe was fashioned out of ruins of the old Christendom. Especially in England we remember that the cathedral was here before the ungainly and uncheerful Reformation: papal bulls have been promulgated in it: crusades, no doubt, preached in it: here Crusaders gathered for their last Mass before setting out, and here they received the Cross. It is not only of them we fail to think, nor of the way-worn, battle-bruised remnant that came back hither to thank God who had brought them safe home again. One Crusader's battered tomb suffices to raise in our mind the whole pageant of the Crusades and of chivalry, that was like a brave trimming and galon upon the old habit of Faith. The certainty that Popes' bulls have been proclaimed here calls up the whole



idea of the Papacy, to which the whole Middle Ages serve but as background. Again, apart from this more historic sense, our emotion of veneration is quickened in us by another sense, that of association and sympathy. Perhaps it is not actually a cathedral in which we find ourselves, but something much smaller, as the chapel of some ancient college at Oxford, for instance, or at Cambridge. Innumerable generations have been young here, many lads destined to be great, great prelates, great statesmen, or great scholars; the place is crowded with their ghosts, not grim spectres of cadaverous shape, but eager spirits, bland and hopeful, with the sunrise on their faces, and generous light of high and noble purpose in their eyes. Nothing touches us closer, or grips our heart with a tenderer warmth of fellowship, and admiration, and sympathy, and compassion. How immortal their youth seemed to them—as did ours once: what a sacred capital was all life, to be invested by each—almost too vast, and so precious that each must be in eager and alert haste lest there should be loss or waste . . . the chapel seems like a great heart with the pulsing of thousands of young lives in it.

This emotion, also, I class as veneration—*Maxima pueris debetur reverentia*, and not to the living young only, but to those as well who, in the great procession, have passed on to the unaging youth of Eternity.

This marvellous sacredness of youth—how the Beloved of Love Himself felt it. He, who had leant near the Heart of the Son of Man, though he lived to so great age, could not grow old, nor wither with old wintry carpings at youth. "I write unto you," said his pen, sixty-six years after the Ascension had drawn

between him and his own heart's Master the holy arras of faith, "I write unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and you have overcome the wicked one."

And, finally, there is admiration. This is put last because, in truth, I hold it least of the motive forces to veneration. But it has also place. If I put it last it is because it depends in some measure upon taste, which is a much less sure guide to a really spiritual emotion: if I put it down at all it is because the admiration here meant does not depend entirely on taste, and depends very little on what is often meant by taste. A perfectly tasteless person cannot be *moved* by the beauty of a cathedral: but the necessary taste need not be reasoned, nor aware of itself, nor founded on expert knowledge of canons of beauty. When a thing *is* beautiful, simple people, if they be clean of heart, are apt to see that it is beautiful. The clean of heart who see God are not all theologians.

Just, then, as the beauty of nature does teach many simple souls, out of an easy book, what the beauty of God must be Who made it, so the loveliness of these places, made by man, reminds them of the Divine Beauty to which even man is constrained, by fitness, to offer such lovely gifts. No palace ever made by man for himself has ever had half the beauty of the fanes even fallen man has raised to God. Is that an accident? The simple will not believe it one: they believe, not in accident, but in Providence and His inspiration.

So the stones preach: it they, being dedicated to a Divine service, can be so noble and so exquisite that men are fain to confess that they who built such places at all events believed in God, what service should not

we render, who know what we are about, who need not wait for others to build us up into a Temple of the Holy Spirit of God, or let chance decide whether from the quarry we go to make a part of His Church or go to help build some new Devil-Temple on earth?

## WHY NORWICH ?

LEEDS and Newcastle were obvious places for a Catholic Congress ; so would Liverpool be, so would Birmingham or Manchester. But why Norwich ?

A good many people seem to have asked themselves this question as, on August 1, 1912, the train carried them far into the East Country.

That the choice of place was the Cardinal's we were told by himself, and from His Eminence, as from the Duke of Norfolk, we learned that at first his choice was frankly criticised, and that by three critics who seemed most concerned in it : by His Grace, by the Bishop of the diocese, and by Canon Fitzgerald, of Norwich. It does not appear that any of them were dubious of the friendliness of the Norwich citizens : their ground of hesitation was merely that the Catholic population of the city is quite small, whereas the Congresses of Leeds and Newcastle had their success largely secured beforehand by the great Catholic population of those cities. The Cardinal did not lay open to the Congress what his own reasons had been : whatever they were, they were justified by the event ; and perhaps we may indulge our surmises as to some of them.

As the train ran over the flat and not striking country of East Anglia, there was not much to be seen from the carriage windows : a land of narrow fields, with rather mean hedgerows not dignified by fine timber : the villages seeming ugly to one who came

from the county of lovely villages—but a land of churches, and all old churches, persistent monuments and reminders of the faith that set them there. Then came Norwich, itself anything but flat, with twisting streets winding eternally up hill and down: and at every turn a church, always an old one, always another monument and another reminder of the ancient faith whose death-warrant King Henry signed as nonchalantly as though it were merely that of a wife; and finally another church, crowning the hill and the city, set there by another Henry in noble, wordless protest that the death-warrant has never been carried out, and never can be: a church that is itself an act of sublime faith, not uttered with chattering lips, in one easy moment, but slowly, with the deliberate silence of thirty years, spelling itself out, stone by stone, till now the whole great Word stands, and will stand while Time has ears to hear it—*Credo*. Was not that church the Cardinal's reason? How better could so princely a gift be welcomed and acknowledged by the Church than by the gathering into it, as for a second dedication, by a Prince of the Church, of the Episcopate of England, and the delegates of her faithful?

And was the Cardinal willing to set us praying as we went thither and came back? In Norwich are over forty ancient churches, and could we pass them in our way without memory of the Exiled Master of them? Who could see them and not think of their arches, like praying fingers, and of the Absent Object of their worship? No White Christ in any of them now, where once He hid Himself from sight, but proved Himself to faith, by the sheer impossibility of such a thing as such a Presence occurring to any imagination but that of God. Man could no more have invented the Eucharist

than he could have invented the Incarnation : only He who thought of entering the world by the lowly gate of birth could have devised how to remain in it in the time-long silence of that White Disguise. All great ideas are simple, and I hope the Cardinal will pardon me if, unwarranted, I attribute to him these. No wonder he stuck to them.

The place of our meeting in Norwich may well have had some minor influence upon the decision of His Eminence, too. Could any see him, on that first evening, when the Lord Mayor was giving him courteous welcome there, and not think that he himself might be truly regarded as host, and the Lord Mayor guest, in that old church of the Black Friars ? Is there any hall, in any English city, where a Cardinal could more fitly gather about him his fellow-bishops and the representatives of their flocks to remind England and them that England was Catholic once and may be again ?

The conversion of England—can we believe in it ? Faith has not intricate problems, but she has hidden treasures ; and to her children she lets the shine of them peep forth, the golden gleam of substance of things to be hoped for, evidence of things that appear not.

England was Britain once, and heathen : it stretched forth praying hands to Rome, and from the father that sits among the Seven Hills beside the yellow river, came the faith. Then was the British nation driven westward to the hills, and the old land took a new name from a new people, and they were heathen, too. This time Rome did not wait to be called, but the old father with a new name, because he could not come himself, sent the Black Monks, with Christ upon their lips and Heaven in their hands, to carry the beacon-

light to our island lonely in the bitter sea. And for a thousand years England was a jewel on the hem of her garment who is God's great Mother.

This time the people were not driven out, nor did they send the faith packing: they were rifled of it, and cheated: very slowly, with cruel fraud, was the old treasure stolen, and something to look like it foisted in its place. The inevitable always happens, and the sorry substitute, discredited and unloved, is losing, daily, the hold that was never due to itself, but externally imposed, so that the cold, borrowed light of Protestant England is swiftly guttering down to the stink and flare of weary paganism; not the simple, groping paganism that has never known Christ, but the stale and vapid paganism that has half-known Him and lost all savour of His sweetness.

Can there be another youth for an old, tired people? Whence can it come? Whence came the light before?

Is this sad worsening a prelude to a new bettering? Perhaps an England weary of its follies, sick of dry and savourless Dead Sea fruit, thirsty, hungry, utterly weary, may turn her eyes again to the hills whence her help came before, those two times, and cry to the World-Father to give his children Bread and Wine and Water again: the Bread that comes from Heaven, the small, round, White Thing, the Red Wine and the White that the soldier's lance let loose, upon whose double tide of Love and Sorrow we are carried out beyond these swamps of time into the deep, deep ocean that is God.

## COLD PORRIDGE

AN unobtrusive, though elderly, gentleman, on a Sunday evening in August, less than a century ago, took his way to church through the streets of an East Anglian city: they were what is called back-streets, though they curved more than is considered necessary in backs. It was a treat for him to be going thus to hear a famous preacher, instead of having to preach some sort of sermon himself. For nine years he had been listening to himself, and the idea of listening to someone else gave him a holiday sense of peace and goodwill. He naturally thought of Oliver Wendell Holmes's clergyman, who perished through lack of religious instruction by reason of having during half a lifetime had to preach at every service he had been attending. Smiling at the witty American's conceit, the elderly priest became aware of a young boy who had begun to dance around him, as he walked, in a witch-like fashion, as though he took his harmless elder for a cauldron. As he skipped he flung up the fingers, first of one hand then of the other, and snapped them, not as implying a compliment.

"Oh, Catholic!" squeaked the boy. "Catholic! Rotten Catholic!" He must have been used to dancing backwards, for he did not trip, or stumble: and as he danced he repeated, almost to monotony, his simple chaunt: "Catholic! Oh, Rotten Catholic."

"You are not strictly correct," the elderly priest—



a stickler, perhaps, for accuracy—pointed out. “A Catholic, perhaps, but not rotten. Not even dead yet, much less rotten.”

The young boy, a little touched in the wind, maybe, seemed disposed to consider the argument, and would have slowed down to do so; but there supervened a mother, not necessarily his own, but all maternity, and with motherly provision of a small stool, which she seemed able to wield with precision, and inclined to employ as a rod. The priest had heard of whipping-stools, but never seen one: if this should prove to be an example it would be interesting.

“*I’ll* warm you!” bawled the lady (not to the elderly gentleman).

“Madam,” said he, “it is not necessary. The evening is close, and he seems active.”

“*I’ll* learn him,” bawled the lady (though an excellent thing in woman her voice was *not* low). “*I’ll* learn him to dance at gentry and call folks Catholics.”

But the boy was averse from learning, and retreated, and the whipping-stool was hurled after him, and hit him, flat side on, in such fashion that, if he had but sat down at once, everything would have been perfectly regular.

The lady was pleased—and she liked being called madam: though it was what she called her own daughter when that daughter was, like Ecclesiastes, very bold.

“That’ll learn you,” she called out, “to call folks names as might be your grandfathers.”

“Madam,” said the priest, “I might not even be *one* of his grandfathers. And he only called me what I am, and what I shall be. When I *am* rotten I shall, please God, be Catholic still. He’s premature, that’s all——”

"Rotten Catholic," yelled the boy, from a safe corner, by a church with a convenient alley hard by it.

A clergyman was approaching the church and also a sort of nun, half-deaconess, half old-maid. On such a breezeless night it was odd how her garments could float so wide, as upon a gale. And how insistent were her feet! Catholic nuns never have any—so far as the public can depone. Protestant nuns are all feet. The elderly priest had been a schoolboy once, and they made him think of a schoolfellow, called Hart, who had the same peculiarity: when a certain psalm was sung all the choir would fix merciless eyes on him, and carol forth: "Thou shalt make his feet like Hart's feet."

"Rotten Catholic!" yelled the lively boy, with renewed wind, and skipping again.

The clergyman and the nun (so to speak) frowned: half as disapproving rudeness, and half wistfully: the rudest boy in Britain had never called "Catholic" after *them*, and never would.

Which things are an allegory.

On his homeward way, the elderly priest paused a moment in an open market, where a preacher, not indigenous, nor racy, of the somewhat lethargic soil, was lashing himself to imbecility, with denunciations of the Pope and the Pope's Church. He seemed to find it easy. It all depends on your starting-point and the distance you have to get. He was rather noisy, but he was also rather dull. His audience was not innumerable: and it hardly seemed on fire. It was not uninteresting to cast a glance on them. Some were easy creatures, not readily shoved into anger with people who came to their city to spend money in it: a

confluence of Catholics they clearly esteemed a sort of protracted picnic, where the picnickers could not reasonably be supposed capable of bringing their provisions with them in paper-bags: anyway they could not sleep in paper-bags, and fifteen hundred or two thousand Catholics, however erroneous their theology, must be good for local hotels. Many of those who came to scoff, and seemed disinclined to remain to pray, had the look of that class of youthful theologian that deals chiefly in *graffiti* on blank walls. They were not, apparently, elated. They wanted to hear something indecent, and wouldn't stop for anything else.

A church clock or two began to strike.

"Oh, fie! Oh, my! My eyes! What lies!" they called out, by way of preparation, and then struck solemnly. "Poof! Poof! Poof!"— Another allegory: and, incontinently, it brought to the elderly priest's mind a rhyme he had not heard for years:—

"The man in the Moon  
Came down too soon,  
And lost his way to Norwich.  
The man from the south  
Has burned his mouth  
Eating of cold plum-porridge."

Yes, the man belonged to the moon, and had lost his way completely; and, eh, how cold the porridge was!

## OF WEAKER BRETHREN

ONE never meets them: Weaker Brethren are never in company: like Mr. Chevy Slyme, it is their peculiarity to be always round the corner. "He is," said Mr. Tigg, "round the corner at this instant. Now," said the gentleman, shaking his forefinger before his nose, and planting his legs wide apart as he looked attentively in Mr. Pecksniff's face, "that is a remarkably curious and interesting trait in Mr. Slyme's character, and whenever Slyme's life comes to be written, that trait must be thoroughly worked out by his biographer, or society will not be satisfied. Observe me, society will not be satisfied."

In any treatise on Weaker Brethren that "comes to be written" that trait, which they share with Mr. Chevy Slyme, must be thoroughly worked out, or society will not be satisfied: but this is not a treatise, and we can merely allude to the curious and interesting feature in their character. Weaker Brethren, we say then, are never actually present: but they are always assumed as being round the corner.

They are never seen any more than Mrs. Bennet's nerves: but that lady was not justified in supposing her husband to be oblivious of them.

"You mistake me, my dear," he said. "I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least."

We cannot see the Weaker Brethren, but we have a high respect for them: they are our old friends, and we have heard them mentioned with consideration for much more than twenty years by the time we are on the practical side of thirty.

Except in being always round the corner, they do not at all resemble Mr. Tigg's friend. Messrs. Slyme and Tigg were not respectable, and they are all respectability. It is, perhaps, part of their weakness to imagine in themselves a monopoly of respectability. But then in their weakness lies their strength: they would not be Weaker Brethren at all, else, and they would not be important.

No one doubts their importance. They often prevent things being done which admittedly ought to be done, or might be done with a large probability of usefulness. True things are often left unsaid, even in pulpits, because Weaker Brethren might not like it. The weakness of Weaker Brethren is never in the tongue: they are not backward in criticism, though their strength is not best displayed in argument. It is precisely because they are impervious to argument that they are Weaker Brethren, and redoubtable.

They are very long-sighted—for future difficulties—when anything is to be done which calls for courage rather than heavy calculation: cold water is their element; not for drinking purposes, or mere ablution, still less for floating anything, but for damping. For the quenching of smoking flax they are the gentry. They are not specially desirous of doing anything: what they enjoy is stopping things being done. When they cannot prevent *something* being done they are all for doing something else. If you have to build a church they will try to stop your building anything:

as a last resource they will insist you should build a school: if it is a school you want, they will vote for an institute instead.

"There is," said Cardinal Manning long ago to the present writer, "a class of persons who have never done anything that mattered, or written anything that mattered, but have something to urge against anything anybody does and anything anybody writes." His Eminence was describing the Weaker Brethren. They are decent people in general, and never give scandal: they take it about once a week. To do so they esteem a sign of delicacy of conscience. The Saints were singularly backward in taking scandal, it was their own faults that shocked them; but the Saints were never Weaker Brethren.

Children are never Weaker Brethren either, for children are simple, and simplicity is not a characteristic of the Weaker Brethren. There are countless numbers of grown persons who are as simple as children, and have much of the innocence of children, but innocence of even a higher kind, for it is not ignorance. They are never Weaker Brethren. The Duke of Wellington observed that he was much exposed to authors: editors, I suspect, are much exposed to Weaker Brethren; but they do not publish all their letters. Priests suffer still more from them, for they inhabit everywhere and have not a mean opinion of their own judgment. Bishops probably receive many letters from them. It would be very wrong to forget that they have their rights: but perhaps there is more danger of their forgetting that the other brethren have rights, too. Much should be conceded to weakness of any kind: but not everything. For things have to be done, and inexpert criticism is not precisely motive

power, but only the drag on the wheel of motion : now a drag is all very well *down* a steep hill, but not quite so useful if it is desired to mount one.

There were plenty of Weaker Brethren in Siena in St. Catherine's time, and they would have liked to extinguish her altogether. If Weaker Brethren had got their own way there would have been no restored Hierarchy in England. But they can't expect to get it always. St. Francis Xavier was terribly exposed to them : so was St. Ignatius, his master : they are not a modern growth, for in almost all the lives of the Saints they occur, though never as the principal character in the story. St. Thomas of Aquino would never have been a Dominican if they could have stopped him. They looked on without misgiving while the Blessed Joan of Arc was being burned at Rouen : but with much misgiving one of their ancestors looked on while the woman that was a sinner washed Our Master's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her degraded head. Simon was only a Pharisee, we are not told he was a bad man : like the other Pharisee, he fasted and paid tithes, and behaved himself morally : he merely belonged to the Weaker Brethren and never suspected it. It is hard for decent people to suspect there is anything amiss with themselves. We can only guess what the ninety and nine feel when the Shepherd goes out into the wilderness to catch one wilful, silly sheep. But the strayed sheep must not bleat at the pushing welcome he receives in the fold : it is enough that the Shepherd thought it worth while to go out and bring him home.

## THE ROMAN ROAD

WHILE this paper is being printed a certain number of our fellow-countrymen and countrywomen will be on the road to Rome: and it is fitting, as it is natural, that our thoughts should go with them. They go not as themselves only, but as a sort of Ambassadors to represent us all. Many thousands, who must stay at home, would go, too, if they could: all should go in spirit. For the National Roman Pilgrimage concerns all the Catholics of England, and is more than the personal journey of them who are able to make it. It must carry with it all our hearts, and express for us all the fealty and faith of the whole Catholic people of this country.

Time was when the Roman Road was very long, and very arduous: when the journey took a great while, and was not always free from hardship and danger. Saracens were at the very gate of Italy ready to swoop down upon the pilgrim from their mountain-eyrie by Fraxinetto. But still the English pilgrims went to the Tomb of the Apostles, and to the feet of St. Peter's Vicar. Long after the danger of Saracens had ceased, there were difficulties; and the journey even down to our own times was very costly. Now it is easy, and quick, and grown very cheap. But such cheapness is comparative. Scores of thousands who would long to make the Roman Pilgrimage have not the means. Perhaps some of them might be able if they would make it a slow,



deliberate purpose, and save a little from year to year that they might put together enough to make the Roman pilgrimage at least once in their lives. Poorish people save as much for less important things. And to have made the Roman Pilgrimage once in life they would find to be more than a memory, it would be a possession. Many holidays are far more costly, and none could be remembered as this: we do not wish to speak of the devout journey to St. Peter's Tomb and Throne as a mere holiday: but it is true that the pilgrimage is not meant to be a dolorous penance. The pilgrims of old days had as much faith and piety as any, but they were a jocund folk, or Chaucer described out of his own head.

This idea of *representation* on the Roman Pilgrimage, simple as it is, and obvious, hardly seems to be enough remembered and acted upon. Of those who cannot go themselves not all are hindered by lack of money; some are too old, and some too delicate; and of these many are rich enough to go—or to send others in their stead. Is that often done? Many a poor relation might well carry to Rome a wealthier kinsman's *vota*: and such *vota* would be doubled, offered as they would be in his person, or hers, who went, and in his name, or hers, who gave the means.

Again, a whole family might join to send one member, and this would involve no great cost for any one member of it. Thousands are rich enough to put by some slight thank-offering to St. Peter every time they go to Confession; and such alms, clubbed together by a family, would easily equip a pilgrim to carry to St. Peter's Tomb, and St. Peter's Seat, the whole gratitude of the family for what St. Peter does for them, year by year, in the gracious sacrament of reconciliation. Do

we remember, I wonder, when we receive absolution, that it is St. Peter's special sacrament? He is the arch-custodian of them all, but in this the sacrament of our daily need, the medicine of our quotidian fevers and sicknesses, we are brought into a life-long personal relation with him. Are we half mindful enough of it, half grateful enough to the Christ-appointed Patron Saint of the Confessional? To him the keys were given: every priest that absolves us does it by his authority, and by delegation from him. The Fisherman himself sits in every Confessional of the world, with keen and eager eyes scanning the waste of waters, turbid waters, and muddy, dark and troubled, to catch our souls for Christ. Is this duly remembered? Each may choose his patron-saint for himself: there are of every sort, so that every sort of man and woman may see in all these mirrors of Christ's perfectness that which may most surely draw him or her to the love of Christ—by cords of a man, Adam-strings of the manhood that is Christ's and was the Saints' too.

But as we are all sinners, and all need penance and forgiveness, Christ Himself chose St. Peter to be Patron Saint of all: the shadow of his gold and silver keys lies over all our lives, for without the golden love and silver sorrow of his sacrament of healing we are all dead men. So that thousands of times in our lives St. Peter and we meet in a matter of poignant interest, ineffable consequence: to forget it is to forget half of St. Peter's perennial office in the Church. The other half is his office of perpetual and indefectible teacher. That we are Catholics at all implies devotion to him: shall we be content if our gratitude is implicit only? The best thing about the best of us is that we are Catholics: Papists, as those outside, with a just instinct,

call us for nick-name. Pope-folk are Peter-folk, and Catholics are Peter's folk, holding unspilt and unsullied the Peter-faith which Christ promised he should carry in his storm-vexed ship unwrecked, till this bitter sea of time is crossed at last, and Peter's passengers shall have been landed by him on the shores of that other sea, unvexed by cloud or storm that smiles beneath the great White Throne of God. And those who take the Roman Road travel not only to Peter's tomb; they go, not only to venerate his relics unviolated through nineteen centuries, but to offer homage at his unshaken throne. Peter lives, not in heaven alone, but on earth; for he is perpetual Viceroy till the King comes again. His word is not a written memory, a manuscript, a monument, but a living voice speaking through live lips that human ears can hear.

That voice is more than an echo among the Seven Hills: it is an utterance never stilled, never silent. And so it has no staleness and no novelty, but sounds in many tones a steadfast, divine unison. The world itself knows it, and ever turns, half-astonished, pricking averse ears, in spite of itself, to hear what that changeless voice shall say: often it hears with bitter protest, for the light, sweet burden is intolerable to many, who want no burden at all but such as they pile for themselves; and, that Christ will not change Himself, nor wear new suits, and babble new promises, is a hard hearing for them. Though He sent them Moses from the dead, and the prophets, they would not listen; for they want a Moses with no law in his hands, and prophets with no God-Man upon their lips.

But for us: we lift our eyes to the hills, whence help came hither when this was Britain, and whence it came again when Christian Britain had become heathen

Saxon-land: Rome brought our fathers to Christ, and Rome keeps us His. The least we can render back is our leal homage and gratefulness. If we be too poor, or too old, or too weak to carry our bodies down that glorious road, we can send our hearts in their hands who go; and bid them, who go for us, with their lips pray for us beside the Apostle's tomb, and with their lips kiss for us the tired feet of him who holds the keys that have so often opened again for us the gates our sins had shut against ourselves.

## OF SAINTS AND WORTHIES

THE Protestant Reformers were great abolitionists; they promised themselves the abolition of all sorts of things—the Pope, purgatory, indulgences, sacred images, sacraments, saints, and much besides. In the case of the Pope the procedure was to be by the method of division: infallibility was thenceforth to reside in everybody—everybody, that is to say, who did not remain Catholic; for a judgment that should happen to coincide with that of the Pope and of some hundreds of millions of Christians still adhering to the Pope, however private, could never claim the noble prerogatives of real privacy.

In the case of the saints there arose another sort of substitutes. Instead of saints the reformed churches plumed themselves on Worthies. Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Zwingli, and the rest of them, were not set up as saints, and no one can be greatly surprised. The title of saint had, in the course of fifteen hundred years, acquired a meaning so definite that to apply it to any of those personages would have suggested comparisons—proverbially odious. And the meaning of the word saint was not one acceptable to the Reformers. In the first place, all the saints had from immemorial time been singularly Roman Catholic. Differing immensely in personal characteristics, in worldly rank, in education, in natural tastes, in a thousand other ways, they had all been distinguished by a peculiar loyalty to the Catholic Faith and to the visible Head of the Church

that was both Catholic and Roman, Catholic in universality, as opposed to nationality or localism, and Roman as having the Bishop of Rome for its supreme earthly head, and Rome as its metropolis and central seat of government and authority. The saints, too, had been pestilently Roman Catholic in other ways, as they had shown by their prayers and their pious practices. They went to Confession, they heard Mass, they adored the Divine Prisoner of Love in His white shackles of the Blessed Sacrament, they venerated sacred relics and images, they went pilgrimages to holy places, they loved and glorified Christ's Mother, and made hymns in honour of her and her unique prerogatives; they sought her intercession and that of the martyrs and other great servants of God. Many of them were monks or nuns, many of them had actually been Popes. They used great austerities on their own bodies, they bound themselves by vows to perpetual chastity, to religious obedience and religious poverty. They did worse than all this, for they wrought miracles in life and after death. English or French, Spanish or Italian, German or African, they were all alike in being intolerably and incurably Catholic: mere Papists all of them. It was inevitable that the Reformers should dislike and miscall them. For centuries these canonised Popes and cardinals, bishops, abbots, monks, nuns, and so on, had been keeping alive the wicked superstition that the Catholic Church is the home and house of sanctity. The Reformers did not like either them or their sanctity; in the reformed churches they should have no home, and they never have had. So far these abolitionists have been as good as their word; the old-fashioned sanctity did not, indeed, obey the proclamation that it was to die out. Saints of the original type and quality

went on appearing; the Reformation period produced a singularly notable group of them, as heroic as ever, as supernatural, as inexplicable by human standards and logic. But the new saints did not swarm in the new hives of reformed Christianity. It was not in any one of the new religious bodies that they showed themselves; but they went on blossoming on the old tree that had always borne them, just as if the dropping off of dead and rotten boughs had made no difference. No complaint can reasonably be made of the Reformation churches' peculiar objection to the post-Reformation saints, for the post-Reformation saints proved themselves, one and all, peculiarly opposed to the Reformation doctrines and ideals.

If saints of the old sort have continued to appear in the old Church, the Reformers have not been troubled by anything of the kind within their own gates. So far they have succeeded; without precisely abolishing sanctity, the superstitious sanctity so obnoxious in Papal religion, they have kept their own ranks quite clear of it.

There have been no Reformation saints, which would seem almost a providential circumstance, as it would be hard to decide whose business it would have been, had any supervened, to canonise them. The Church of England produced a Royal martyr, but poor Charles I was never much revered by overseas Protestants, and his cult even at home was chiefly confined to a venerable political party now equally defunct with himself. Those who did not belong to that party seem to have thought that even cutting off that head could never put much into it, and that the martyr to some extent fell a victim to his unlucky predilection for telling fibs. He was not, at all events, *our* Martyr, and it does not

concern us to be *Advocatus Diaboli* or *Promotor Causæ*; but I would wish to say, frankly, that I for my part do not ascribe the King's execution to his faults, but to the ambition and hypocrisy of his enemies. That he was a saint I do not believe; that he was better than nine-tenths of the Protestant worthies I do firmly believe. Had he been a saint I doubt whether either Laud or Strafford would have been beheaded. That he and they died very nobly no enemy of theirs has ever tried to deny. Charles I and Laud were not by any means Protestant worthies, but they were among the best of the Anglican.

Real Protestant worthies were creatures like the unspeakable Knox, and the really disreputable Burnet; but out of Scotland the former has never been admired, and even in England the latter has long been recognised as a conscienceless time-serving courtier and sycophant who would have been glad to play *Cranmer* to Charles II's *Henry VIII*, had that too much decried scapegrace been willing to descend to such infamy as the royal author of the Reformation in England unblushingly perpetrated.

Tillotson was a worthy, too, and the Archbishop of Canterbury was a far better man than the Bishop of Salisbury; but even the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn, whose chaplain he was in 1664, complained that "since Mr. Tillotson came, Jesus Christ has not been preached among us." If he was not Christian enough even for a corporation of Restoration lawyers, his Christianity must have been vague indeed. Still, it was enough to plant him on the throne of St. Augustine, St. Anselm, and St. Thomas à Becket, not in the time of Charles II, for Charles gave no mitre either to him or Burnet, but in that of the Prince of Orange, another Protestant worthy

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and Patron-Worthy of all Protestants in Ireland to this day. If ever Protestantism could have longed to canonise anyone, William of Orange would have been the man, though whether the process would have been carried out by the States-General of Holland, the Parliament of England, or the Orange lodges of Ireland no one can now determine. Henry VIII and his daughter Elizabeth (of virginal memory) have always been regarded as Proto-worthies by the full-blooded Protestant, by whom the elder monarch's bluff adulteries have never been counted to him for unrighteousness, who can never perceive that he was simply a bad and villainous Catholic, and that Elizabeth was merely a sceptical autocrat with no idea of permitting in her realms any religion she could not carry in her own pocket. Father and daughter hanged priests and tried to lay the Pope under an interdict; so they are Protestant worthies and entitled to the smug halo of the same. The royal triad is completed by Edward VI, also a worthy, in addition to being an anæmic prig, which Protestant worthies usually are not.

But the race is not confined to princely personages and Erastian Bishops. (Hoadly deserves a niche to himself, and it is a shame to mention him thus in parenthesis.) Oliver Cromwell was a worthy, and he was no king, though that was really not his fault. Sir Walter Raleigh was another, as was Drake, as were Hawkins and Frobisher, all very eminent men and fine seadogs; but it was not their valour or sea-science that made them worthies, it was their fondness for piratical enterprises against Catholic Spain. Titus Oates was a worthy, and to this day there are those who love him none the less for the infamy of his life. If his vices

did not lean to virtue's side they were enlisted against the Catholics, and the multitude of his sins was more useful than any amount of charity could have been.

Some of the worthies had none of the high colouring distinctive of a few whom we have mentioned; they were harmless, half-forgotten men of letters like Fuller, himself the historian of the worthies, and to his book the reader may refer who wants more detailed instances. He will find among them many very respectable people, some famous in their day, some still remembered. But what will strike the Catholic reader most is the singular difference between these Reformation worthies and the saints of the old religion. The former at their best scaled the giddy heights of respectability; to have attempted more would have been to risk their place among the worthies. What would Burnet have been had he aimed at sanctity? We can only say that he would certainly not have been Burnet. It is to be regretted that they were not *all* respectable. Had Henry VIII been so, Queen Elizabeth would never have existed.

## OF GREAT AGE

LORD MELBOURNE is supposed to have said that the best of the Order of the Garter was that there was no "D—d nonsense of merit about it." We must suppose he meant that it was given, not for anything you might have done, but for what—or who—you were. Perhaps that is why others besides Lord Melbourne so deeply venerate them who get it.

For it is odd how much more people are esteemed for things they cannot help than for things they do of themselves. Most kings can't help it: they are born so, not precisely kings, but with circumstances so powerfully in favour of their becoming kings that they only have to wait and it happens. Sovereigns who do it of their own accord are not so much admired. Napoleon could perfectly help becoming an emperor, but he didn't try, and an emperor he became, and it was the only thing for which anybody could laugh at him. And even regular kings, who have to be, because their fathers were before them, are not commonly thought so much of on account of their virtues as for the fact that they are kings. It is the inherited sovereignty that dazzles, not the wisdom or excellence. When a hundred thousand persons wait for many hours in the rain to see a king go by, it is not because he is as good a man as any in his realm, but because he is the only one in it who can, off the stage use a sceptre instead of an umbrella if he pleases.

And so of all high birth. Nobody that has it can help it. The most industrious ingenuity is unable to arrange it. Even Chinese emperors could not ennoble folks' ancestors in such a manner as to cause the ancestors to *have been* noble. There is no nonsense of merit about high birth: if you have got it you may not deserve it, and though you deserve it never so much you cannot attain it by your deserving if it happens to be wanting. And that is precisely why it is really esteemed. Almost anything can happen to you in a Republic: your father may have been a crossing-sweeper, and you may be a senator. Your father may have been a senator, and you may be a perfectly honest man. But even in a Republic you cannot rise to be well-born: that is why in Republics they are so fearfully in earnest about pedigrees. Again, if you, my dear reader, are a miracle of beauty, you can't help it. That is why you are so immensely applauded for it. If you could prove that you were originally a hideous person, and had arrived at your present degree of loveliness by industry and no sparing of expense, everyone would laugh at you. If you could convince us that your wonderful hair was a matter of faultless taste and judicious choice, and an ungrudging purse; that your left eye was your own idea, and selected from a thousand others by an unerring judgment, to fill a hollow left by nature or accident; that your teeth replace a row of uncouth tusks, extracted anything but painlessly; that your complexion was not a gift but a purchase—why, how we should all pish and giggle at you.

If Mary Stuart had *made herself* the loveliest woman of her day, and had meekly explained the process, she might have outlived Queen Elizabeth, but not the gibes of Elizabeth's courtiers.

Beauty is accounted meritorious because no one by any degree of merit can achieve it.

And, next to high birth and beauty, and the Order of the Garter, there is nothing folk so much pride themselves upon as great age. The public admits the claim and applauds. The newspapers chronicle the meritorious circumstance, and the sovereign telegraphs approval. He has to; it is his business, in a constitutional country, to reflect the feeling of his people. For sixty years you may have been doing your duty very laboriously, nay, for seventy-five—there is nothing magical in those numbers: you are not commemorated in even the column that records that a Mrs. Smith has had triplets (and she could not help that either), and that the sovereign of a Balkan State has “assumed the regal title.” But twiddle your thumbs till you are a centenarian, and you are sure of your paragraph. Let your youngest daughter be turned of eighty, and all Tallis Street will encourage you to go on doing nothing in particular for, if possible, another decade.

People are apt in middle-life to resent the circumstance and hate you for seeming aware of it. Wait a bit. Wait a good bit. No one frankly admits the foul offence of being nearer sixty than fifty, but no one over ninety can resist boasting of it. Some attribute it to having never eaten salt, some to never having eaten anything else. Some to being life-long total abstainers, others to having never abstained from anything. But it is not the cause that interests us; for at our own age, say, at sixty, we cannot begin to be life-long abstainers from salt, or from nothing: it is the mere longevity that is admired.

Those who write reminiscences of eighty or ninety years are so alive to the merit that is really theirs that

they endeavour to enhance it by linking on their own lives to someone else's. "I was not born till 1815," says the autobiographer, "and I do not remember the Battle of Waterloo; but my grandmother (Georgiana Duchess of St. Ives and Chiltern) often described to me her godfather, George I, who died when she was seven. *His* grandmother was the Winter Queen, and could, of course, remember James I, her father. So that I have been kissed by one who was kissed by a king who had often been slapped by a lady that the first Stuart King of England had corrected for childish faults. It seems to bring one very near to Queen Elizabeth, whom the Modern Solomon succeeded." In this way the reminiscencer can introduce anecdotes of the Tudor court as if they belonged to himself.

Are we laughing at great age? God forbid we should—at age, or youth, or venerable childhood. If Jaques talks of the mewling and puking babe, the slippered pantaloon, the second childishness and mere oblivion, there is more sadness than gibe in it: he is the melancholy Jaques. And be sure there was no gibe in the great tragic-comedian who put the seven stages in his mouth. He would not be Shakespeare without a reverence for every phase of our poor human life. Winter has beauties more lovely and more poignant than any of summer's; not sadder than autumn's, nor less divinely hopeful than any in spring. The year's resurrection is nearer in frozen January than in many-hued October. The dawn is loveliest on a February morning, when the sun, unrisen yet, turns all its frosty pearl to opal, than in staring August, when day comes hustling back before the earth has had time to rest her dazzled eyes.

To the sight of the aged there comes a change that

is not an accident nor a failing: near things and little are no longer seen so well; their detail is merged and softened. But the great distant things are drawn nearer, and the eyes seek them the more willingly that the small, petty things at hand are grown mistier. You shall note the gaze of the very old turned oftenest to far horizons, especially if these rise to heights behind which the clouds sink with day-fall. Another light than that on the child's is on their faces, or the same come back and falling from the same place at a wider angle. It fades often from the child-face, or loses itself in a hotter and more common light: from the old white face it is the shadows that fall away, while the sun, unrisen yet, foretells the full dawn in a glow of unearthly delicacy and radiance.

## MARE'S NESTS AND MUCH BOASTING

SOMETHING in a paper never read by the present writer was quoted to him the other day, and, as it was only a quotation, it would be worse than temerarious to attempt a requotation. But the point urged appears to have been that Catholics, if not the Catholic Church, make undue parade of accessions to our religion from other bodies, as, for instance, from the Church of England. That those who join us make some sort of boast of it, and so do we on their account; whereas recessions occur from our Church to other bodies, as to the Church of England, and the receders make no boast of it, nor is any made on their behalf by the religion which satisfies, better than ours, their ideals of unity, sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity. It is not meant that the above phrasing represents that of the paragraphs in the newspaper; it is merely what I understood to represent the subject matter of the complaint or twit. Probably there was no allusion to the unity, sanctity, catholicity, or apostolicity of the religion, or religions, whither lapsed Catholics may betake themselves.

Is there any truth in the assertion conveyed? Are we concerned to deny it altogether? I do not see that we are.

If those who become Catholics boast of what they have done, self-righteously, they are in fault, as all self-



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righteousness is faulty. If they held themselves as though their conversion were so great a thing for the Church that the Church ought to feel herself slightly overpowered by the honour done to her, they would show themselves singularly lacking in a sense of proportion. But they may glory in finding themselves where they are without any personal boast in the matter: the woman in the Scripture who found the groat she had been seeking called her friends and neighbours together to rejoice with her, and He who tells us of it does not blame her; and the true faith is a greater find than a groat. The rejoicing is a sign of appreciation of the thing found, and need not imply vanity or self-consequence. I think it is true that our converts do so rejoice, and their joy does not quickly evaporate: it does not wear away when the novelty of their position, as co-heirs of all the Church's treasures, has been worn away, but deepens through life and is deepest when life itself is ending.

It may be true that those who leave the Catholic Church for some other make no boast, personal or otherwise. It is very likely. They may betray no pride and no elation: and one does not wonder. It is a humble moment; and, if they are aware of it, it may mean some remnant of grace. At all events their silence cannot surprise us. If they abstain from calling friends and neighbours to rejoice with them, they doubtless have their own reasons, and one who is no wizard may divine them. To rejoice, even rather loudly, over treasure-trove is as natural as it is human and harmless: to make much cry over the acquisition of a mare's nest only proclaims an imbecility it were better to hide. To find your mare's nest, and hold your tongue about it, is a natural result of some suspicion as to the importance

of your discovery. It would not appear that we are much concerned to deny that converts to Catholicity arrive with a sense of elation and delight they are unable to repress; and that receders from Catholicity withdraw with all reasonable meekness, in perfect silence, and without the least tendency to betray elation, or even relief.

But does the Catholic Church, or do Catholics, make a great to-do over the arrival of converts? These are two separate questions though one in principle. The Catholic Church at large is not commonly aware of the accession of converts unless they arrive in masses, so to speak, or their importance is peculiarly significant in some special way. If it could be aware of each individual conversion it would rejoice over each, as the Good Shepherd in the parable rejoiced over the finding of the one sheep that had been wandering in the wilderness. When converts are made in striking numbers the Church, and her Head on earth, are aware of it, and there is great rejoicing: so there has been in Rome over the conversion of whole nations brought to the faith by the apostolic men Rome has sent forth to carry God's truth to them.

On ordinary occasions it is different. If the writer of the gibe, or complaint, we speak of, were to be converted to Catholicity, the Pope would perhaps not be informed, nor would the Catholics in America, Australia, or even Austria: and Rome, New York, Melbourne, and Vienna would go on just as if nothing particular had happened. If, however, the fact were known in all those places it would cause rejoicing: not that the Universal Church had escaped a great menace, or plumed her cap with a remarkable feather, but because another soul had been brought to what is meant for the safety and

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sanctification of all souls. In the meantime those who did know would be glad: not all Rome (such is the defective supply of information even in these days of telegrams and postcards), nor all the Catholic Church in England, or Bayswater, but all Catholics who should know that another spiritual brother had been born to them.

Converts themselves should know as much about it as those who have not the least intention of becoming converts. What is their experience? Did we find, when we became Catholics, that the Catholic Church had her head turned? Did the Pope suffer from an accession of blood to the head? It was a great day for us: was it made a festival for Christendom? Was the priest who received us promoted, or has he since confided to us his just disappointment at the delay in his promotion? Was all Catholic Battersea agog, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, even anonymously, warned that he had better look out—Mr. Smith had turned Catholic, and the Established Religion was on its last legs?

Nay, but Mr. Smith is given a friendly welcome—and a friendly warning. He has made a beginning, let him see to it that he walks worthily of the great grace God has given him. He is a child of the Church now, but her babe; let him learn, and let him, above all, learn obedience. Of babes not much else is required. Much talking is not seemly in babies: they are but stammerers, and precocious speech is seldom instructive. He is not greatly flattered, but he is sincerely congratulated. He has done as good a day's work in becoming a Catholic as he could do under the circumstances. Certainly he is congratulated—on his own account, not because the Church stood in special need of him, but because he

and all men stand in great need of her. Is there no such congratulation for the neophyte who flings himself into the arms of the Church of England? Has she no such embrace for him? Why not? Is there no warm congratulation? Does such congratulation seem out of place? It may be. I, for one, can believe it. Perhaps those to whom he goes wonders why he comes. What brings him? What has he to gain spiritually, what is he willing, spiritually, to lose? Dr. Johnson was a devout Anglican, a hundred times more devout an Anglican than any thousand Anglicans you shall commonly meet. "I shall never," said he, "be a Papist, unless on the near approach of death, of which I have a very great terror." What says he of converts from "Protestantism to Popery" and vice versa? "A man," declared the Doctor, "who is converted from Protestantism to Popery, may be sincere: he parts with nothing: he is only superadding to what he already had. But a convert from Popery to Protestantism gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as anything that he retains . . . there is so much *laceration of mind* in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting."

Laceration of mind hardly begets elation in those who have to endure it: and if they who welcome them do so with a calm that is much like coldness, who can wonder?

Many receders from Catholicity even abstain from making their names public, we are told, and, upon my word, I can readily believe it.

## OF LAPSE AND LOSSES

IN our last paper we spoke of the difference alleged to exist in the bearing of converts to Catholicity from that of such as have left the Church for some other religious body. But there are differences other than those of bearing and demeanour; and it may be worth while to allude to them briefly.

To many Catholics it comes with a shock of surprise to learn that there *are* people who leave the Church with deliberate intention. In many missions and parishes such a thing has never happened within their memory. They hear with horror that there is a considerable annual leakage in England; but they understand that for the most part the leakage is due not to any wilful decision of adult Catholics to abandon the faith of our fathers, but to quite other causes, however deplorable. Some of the causes given are the following:—Children of Catholic parents are left orphans, and without relations willing or able to support them; such children are taken into workhouses or homes, and are brought up in non-Catholic religions, either through ignorance of what their parents' religion was, or through a more or less deliberate unwillingness that they should receive Catholic instruction. Or, in the case of a mixed marriage, the Catholic parent dies; the children, being still very young, no longer receive Catholic instruction, either because the non-Catholic parent is glad to recede from his undertaking, or because he or she is too

indifferent. In many instances the surviving non-Catholic parent sends the children to a non-Catholic school because it is, or claims to be, of a higher standing than any Catholic school in the neighbourhood. In many cases the surviving non-Catholic parent marries again, and marries a non-Catholic, and the step-parent is more indifferent or more antagonistic to the religion of the Catholic children than their remaining parent. It is not difficult to understand how little chance, under such circumstances, there is of the semi-orphan Catholic children being brought up in the religion of their dead father or mother.

Again, children who are not drafted into workhouses, or homes, or industrial schools, but who have lost one or both parents, are often received into the families of non-Catholic relations: even where both the deceased parents were Catholics, such people are not always willing that their adopted children should have a religion different from their own. Where only one parent was Catholic, and the children are taken home by the relations of the non-Catholic parent, they are very unlikely to receive a Catholic education. The non-Catholic parent may survive, but may be quite indifferent, or unwilling to propose vexatious conditions to those who are relieving him, or her, of the support of children it is convenient to be rid of: that convenience is specially obvious in the case of poverty, or in the case of the surviving non-Catholic parent wishing to marry again.

All these cases must be of such frequent occurrence in an enormous population like that of England, that, though we may be startled to hear any estimate of their numbers, we can hardly be astonished. It is truly lamentable to hear of them, but in none of these cases

does the lapse of those who ought to be Catholics suggest the least choice or deliberation on the part of the lapsed. The faith was never relinquished by them, but simply withheld from them.

What shocks as well as distresses is to hear of grown people, brought up Catholics, lapsing from the Church. Of what sort are they, and how does it happen?

In some instances it comes about thus: A Catholic makes a mixed marriage, and makes it in the worst way possible, without seeking any dispensation and without making, or asking the non-Catholic party to make, the undertakings necessary in order to secure a dispensation. The marriage takes place, therefore, in a non-Catholic place of worship, or in a registry-office. The Catholic willing to do this either marries a person without religion, or with religious prejudices hostile to the Catholic Faith; and in either case a Catholic indifferent enough to behave thus will probably be easily open to the irreligious or anti-Catholic influence of the other party. In such cases the nominal Catholic, who has begun by violating the law of the religion thus loosely professed, is very apt to continue an outlaw, and to remain in that neglect of the practices of religion which is so nearly certain to end in complete, if gradual, loss of all faith. Such loss of Catholic faith is grievous and lamentable, but it does not count as an accession to any other opposed religion. In very much rarer instances the Catholic who has shown himself or herself thus careless of his own, or her own, religion is drawn by the non-Catholic to frequent non-Catholic places of worship, and to become more or less informally, if practically, a member of that other religion. Such cases are by no means common, even when there has been a mixed marriage in a registry-office or non-

Catholic place of worship. Where they do occur they prove chiefly this, that the Church is wise in her strict conditions as to the permission of mixed marriages, and that those who violate the condition are but nominally Catholics. They illustrate the truth that it is only a very bad sort of Catholic who is ready to fling aside what can barely be called his faith for some other religious profession.

Again, there are cases where, mixed marriages apart, Catholics so progressively neglect the practice of religion that they lapse from religion altogether, and finally cease even to call themselves Catholic. Such as these seldom join any other religious body: when they do, it is scarcely because they even profess to find in it a loftier presentation of faith or a higher standard of morals; but rather because there is *no* absolute rule of faith, and morals are left to private taste and judgment. Their adhesion to the new religious body is chiefly outward, and involves no special admiration of it. To be free to believe as little as you like, and to be relieved from the recurrent obligations of Catholic practice, is a great convenience if you have become very nearly an agnostic.

It may be urged that some cases might be produced of undeniably earnest Catholics having lapsed. But such cases would, if examined individually, be found to range themselves into two very small classes. The first would consist of persons who had been converts to the Catholic faith, but had probably never truly grasped it; who had, in reality, perhaps, never been Catholics at all. They joined the Church for sentimental or æsthetic reasons, without ever arriving at the idea of an infallible authority, out of a sort of preference, not out of any conviction of the obligation of belief. If it be contended



that those who have left the Church for other bodies and return to it, return to it for the same reason—because they never were convinced and real Protestants at all, I am not concerned to deny the probability of the contention.

But two small classes were mentioned above ; the other consists of a very few individuals, but of individuals of more note, for seriousness and earnestness. In each instance it will be found that these persons have been led astray into some teachings or professions which have led to ecclesiastical prohibitions and censures : not until they fell under the Church's condemnations have they shown any disposition to leave her. Even under condemnation, and even when refusing to submit to the Church's rulings, they have not commonly joined any other church : when they have done so, it is not because they specially admire that other church, but on the principle that any port is better than none in a storm, and because of the convenience of belonging to a body that exacts no profession of faith. They shelter there *faute de mieux*, not because they profess to think it best of all. The Church will not allow them to call themselves her members and teach what is not her teaching, so they loosely attach themselves where they may teach as they choose.

The significance of conversions to the Church, on the other hand, very greatly depends on the fact that conversion to it implies and necessitates a definite acceptance and profession of the whole of her faith. The Church will not admit those who merely dislike the religious teaching of other bodies ; she does not open her arms to those who find other religions too strict in exacting conformity to some rule of faith, or standard of practice : what she demands is conformity, and more

than conformity, inward acceptance, of her whole rule of faith, and of her ordinary practice. No priest would receive into the Church a person whose confession of faith amounted only to condemnation of the Thirty-nine Articles, or who betrayed his intention of not hearing Mass every Sunday, or not going to Confession and receiving Holy Communion according to ecclesiastical law.

No one does, or could, become a Catholic because he had lapsed into practical agnosticism, or because he had fallen under the censures of any other religious authority.

To re-state what is so obvious may seem dry and tedious enough, but it happens to make all the difference. It suggests very simply a reason why non-Catholic bodies should make but small capital out of lapses from our Church to theirs. There is not much wool, and no great wonder if there be very little cry.

THE END

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